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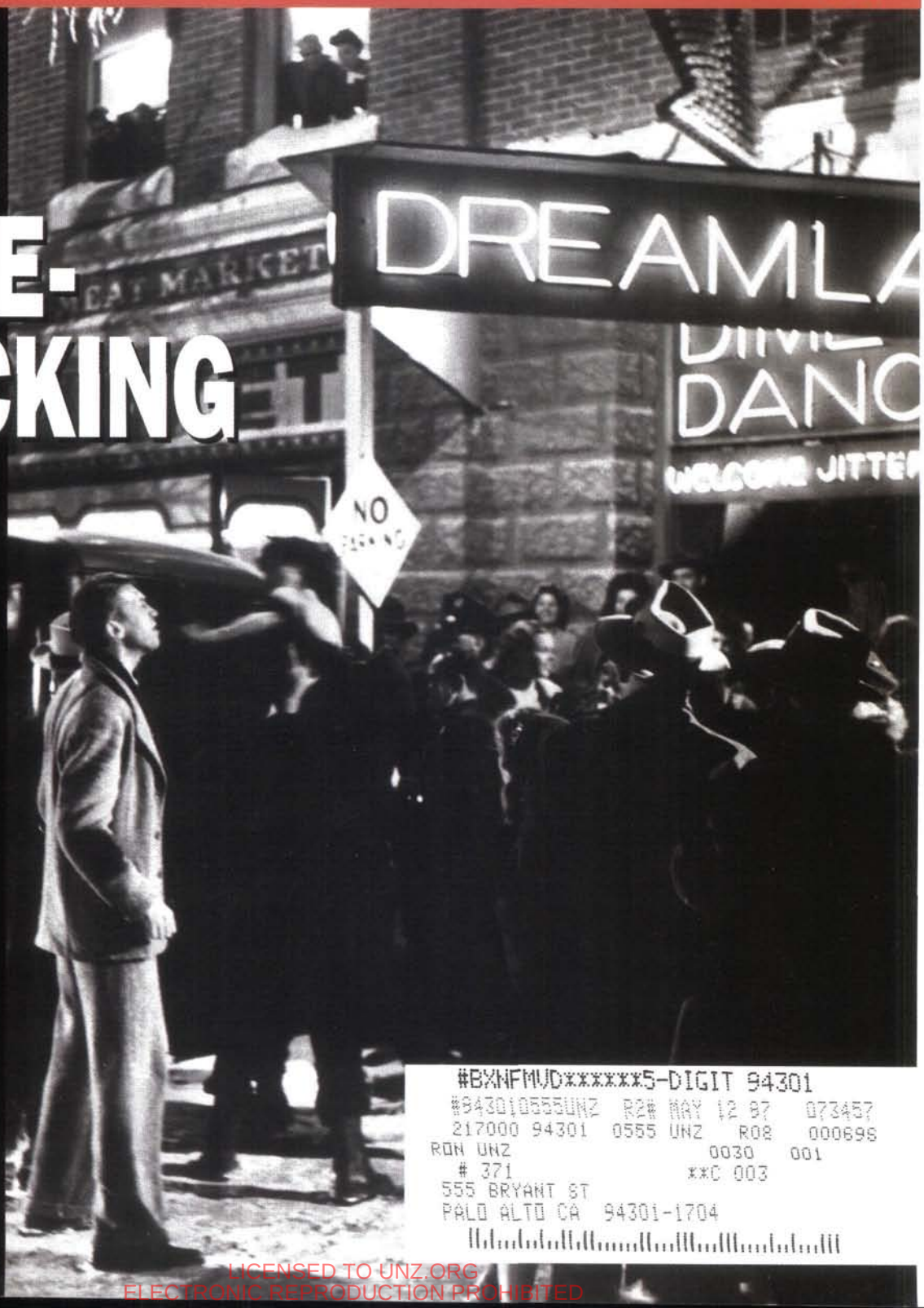

IT'S A NERVE-WRACKING LIFE

THE OVER-ENTERTAINING OF AMERICA

by Michael Anton

Middlebrows, R.I.P.

DAVID BROOKS

Politicizing "Epidemics"

TUCKER CARLSON

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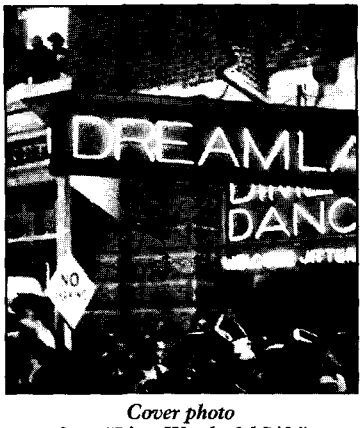

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Reagan-Hating at the Reagan Library

When the Reagan Library in Simi Valley, California, explores "The Reagan Legacy" on May 20, the keynote address will be delivered by Mike Wallace of *60 Minutes*. He'll give a "personal perspective" on Reagan. Why Wallace? He's a favorite of Mrs. Reagan. But does he understand the Reagan legacy, let alone respect it? In his memoir *Call the Briefing*, Reagan press secretary Marlin Fitzwater recalls the last time Wallace was supposed to give a sympathetic rendering of the Reagan presidency. Promising to give Reagan a chance to build the historical record, Wallace wangled a 45-minute interview with President Reagan shortly before he left office. Fitzwater feared Wallace "would ask mostly about Iran-Contra . . . never stop at 45 minutes . . . ask technical questions to stump the President . . . ask the same question several ways to show inconsistency." And that's exactly what happened.

Since the Reagan Library has made a habit of seeking the imprimatur of media and political figures deeply hostile to the Reagan legacy and the man personally, all one can say is: There they go again.

Al Gore and the Unabomber

Remember the relish with which the press (and the president) explored the connection of the Oklahoma City bombing to conservative political philosophy? Somehow, in all the coverage of the arrest of Unabomber suspect Theodore J. Kaczynski, the fact that he was driven to kill 3 and injure 23 (including David Gelernter, author of a marvelous piece for this magazine on the art of Winslow Homer) by a radical leftist enviro political stance has somehow been left to one side. After all, if it were fair to blame Rush Limbaugh for Timothy McVeigh, surely the media could find room to blame the Unabomber on Al Gore. National Public Radio featured the preposterous countercultural novelist and critic Theodore Roszak condemning the Unabomber for the slipshod prose of his 35,000-word manifesto. Actually, it seemed to us to be a rather thorough and thoughtful compendium of the very ideas Roszak and his ilk believed in then and probably still do.

Downsizing the Minimum Wage Guys

Is the Clinton administration harping on the minimum wage out of concern for workers or because its hopes for a Democratic Congress rest on that notorious $35 million in union spending promised by AFL-CIO chief John Sweeney? While Labor secretary Robert Reich has torqued up the rhetoric, the behavior of his own department's Employment Standards Administration suggests the minimum wage isn't a priority at all.

The Employment Standards Administration has three subdivisions. There's the Wage and Hour Division, which handles minimum wage laws, among other things. There's the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs. And the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, largely devoted to promoting affirmative action.

The continuing resolution under which these divisions are operating runs only through April 13. If there's no new CR, it will again be furlough time in Washington. So who gets furloughed? Reich plans no furlough days at all for the apparently crucial affirmative action division; a few days of furlough for the slightly less important workers' comp division. And the minimum wage division? Get this: 20 furlough days, the maximum allowable.

John Sweeney, call the DNC pronto.

The Maurice Bishop Appreciation Act

Sen. Bob Kerrey of Nebraska, who heads the National Democratic Senatorial Committee, believes it is "probable the Senate will be back in Democratic hands" come January 1997. Martin Frost of Texas, who chairs the Democratic Congressional Campaign Com-

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mittee, says the Democrats will target a large number of Republican freshman "in order to regain control of the House." And House minority leader Richard Gephardt hopes voters will give Democrats "another chance to show what we can do" as the majority party of the 105th Congress. Well, here's a preview of the Democrats who would likely chair some of the major House committees in Gephardt's "can-do" 105th Congress.

As the head of the House Appropriations Committee, David Obey of Wisconsin would pump more of your tax dollars to every agency and department in the federal bureaucracy. Obey supported Bill Clinton's $16 billion pork-laden "stimulus" package in 1993 and regards the balanced-budget amendment and the line-item veto with horror. John Conyers of Michigan, who opposes the death penalty and is a trial lawyer's delight, would take charge of the House Judiciary Committee. At the helm of the National Security Committee would be Ron Dellums of California, known for his love of deposed Grenadian Communist leader Maurice Bishop and one of 54 Democratic leftists who sought a federal injunction to stop President Bush from dispatching troops to the Persian Gulf. Massachusetts's Joe Moakley, the quintessential liberal hack, would be back at the House Rules Committee, presumably doing what he did best in the 103rd Congress—muzzling House debate and thwarting votes on popular items like a real balanced-budget amendment. As for that tax cut you've been waiting for, the prospective chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Charles Rangel of New York, has deemed Republican tax-cut proposals just another form of "racism."

The Reading List

In the week of Easter and Passover, the Reading List could not help but reflect on the joys—and the ambiguities—of the family gathering. Few great works have been written about the joys of family, but there are plenty about the ambiguities. Of course, the world's greatest writers (those who wrote before this century) hardly imagined that family would come to be an impermanent, almost consensual thing. They were writing about an institution as strong, and immutable, as a mountain range. Perhaps that's why they felt no hesitation in stressing what we might call the "downside" of family life.

Anna Karenina, by Leo Tolstoy. Tolstoy's previous novel, *War and Peace*, concludes with an idyllic image of family, a blessed private life after the disruptions of war. In *Anna Karenina*, the novelist refuses us even that haven by showing us the unhappy complexities of married life and its inability to satisfy the most restless souls. Happy families are all alike, after all.

David Copperfield, by Charles Dickens. Dead parents, evil stepfathers, loving aunts, and the noble father-figure Barkis and mother-figure Peggotty, who constitute David's true family.

The Man Who Loved Children, by Christina Stead. If you want to be depressed for a couple of weeks, this remarkable novel is for you: the portrait of a suffocatingly close and sloppy family run by a liberal do-gooder whose love for his children masks his own totalitarian sensibility.

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Casual

Vegas Needs Hookers

Everybody knows by now that Las Vegas has transformed itself into a "family entertainment center." The city once notorious for its hookers, gangsters, and drunks has infantilized itself. The monstrous new luxury hotels on the "Strip" resemble theme-park rides. I stayed at the pyramid-shaped Luxor; it has a full-scale replica of King Tut's tomb in the basement, a riverboat that travels around the first level, and, at each corner, a bank of elevators (the hotel calls them "inclinators") that rise to the pyramid's apex at a literally nauseating 30-degree angle.

Even along the city's distinctly seedy Fremont Street, down which Elvis famously drove in a T-bird convertible singing "Viva Las Vegas," a stunning transformation has taken place. Four city blocks of Fremont Street have been covered, umbrella-like, by an archway made of lightbulbs. (Imagine an electronic scoreboard at a baseball stadium one-sixth of a mile long, 40 feet overhead.) Every hour on the hour, after dusk, all other illumination along the street is turned off and, from above, there comes a light show bright as day—a 10-minute-long explosion of colors and images dancing in time to country music. It's called the "Fremont Street Experience," and the guidebooks proudly inform you that it cost $70 million.

Las Vegas capitalists talk about the jaw-dropping amounts they have spent on things with deep pride. The Mirage Hotel, which began the mad rush of new construction on the Strip at the end of the 1980s, cost $600 million. The MGM Grand, a billion two. The Luxor, three-quarters of a billion. The city is a tribute to untrammeled capitalism and, on the surface, is an object lesson in the virtues of allowing the market to make decisions leading to general prosperity without the interference of meddling bureaucrats and zoning crazies. But only on the surface, because everything in Vegas is only on the surface. None of this "family entertainment" has anything whatever to do with the real purpose of Las Vegas, which is to serve as a pimp for a deep and dangerous human weakness. Vegas aims to make it as easy as possible for people to impoverish themselves in the elusive quest for the one thing that really doesn't exist in America or elsewhere: easy money.

Because, of course, the rides and the shows (I saw Jay Leno, much better in person than on TV) and the electronic light displays are all a sham, a Potemkin village of the spirit. The city is actually about its casinos, and they're all the same. Oh, the new ones are bright and high-ceilinged, the old ones darker and more claustrophobic—patterns that conform to generational changes in American taste. But otherwise, a casino is a casino is a casino. Each has the same games as the others, the same slot machines, and the same disorienting design.

There is no way to get from point A to point B in a casino, no evident path even to the bathroom; no matter where you are, you are forced to dead-end into a blackjack pit, a bank of slots, a roulette table. There are no clocks, no music, just the hypnotic, constant tintinnabulation of the slot machines as they pay off a few quarters (or, more likely, ding to indicate that someone has just put a $20 bill into them). The goal is to distract, then tempt, then entice you, and always with the same seduction: *You're due! This is your lucky day!*

But there is one important difference between the older casinos and the new. By their shabbiness and lack of gentility, the older ones are a more honest expression of the essential tawdriness at the heart of this vice-peddling. They reek of bad conscience or nihilistic cynicism. They don't bother to gussy things up. They are populated by elderly employees who have seen thousands of poor, deluded suckers ruin their lives in the space of a few hours or a few days because they forgot, or never learned, the real truth of gambling. It can be summed up in two words: *You lose.*

It would be better if the Luxor and the Mirage were filled to the brim with prostitutes and pimps and hoodlums, because that would remind tourists where they really are. Instead, they can kid themselves that they are at Disney World, and can come back again and again, ostensibly to entertain the kids, but really to feel that crazed rush that comes when you hit a blackjack or get three bars in a row on a slot machine. The memory of losing fades; the memory of winning stays with you.

Las Vegas has perfected what the characters in that great 1973 movie *The Sting* called "the big con." The "big con" is the one where the person being bilked never, ever finds out he has been conned. In *The Sting,* the man being bilked was a gangster who (gasp!) cheated at cards. These days, from Las Vegas to Atlantic City down to the daily state-sponsored lottery, the people being bilked are . . . the American people.

John Podhoretz

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Communism, Not Dead Yet

After reading your excellent issue on anti-communism (April 1), I was surprised to find that not one of your contributing writers touched upon the reality that communism is not dead, but is very much alive and active.

Those of us who lived under communism and were exposed to its Leninist tactics are painfully aware of the fact that we live, as Mikhail Gorbachev has said, in the era of the second world socialist revolution.

Communism has only temporarily retreated to obtain modern technology from the capitalist world and to restructure its forces before it moves forward again.

Marxism-Leninism, with its dialectical and historical materialism, is too powerful an ideology to be discarded by improvised and short-term Western reactions.

LIBOR BROM
LAKEWOOD, CO

Kosinski and the KGB

I enjoyed J. Bottum's review of James Park Sloan's biography of Jerzy Kosinski ("Congenital Liar," April 1). It sent me to my bookshelf for a copy of John Corry's *My Times*, a modest but great autobiography of Corry's career at the *New York Times*.

Corry tells how he was assigned to write a feature on Kosinski's problems. He did a masterful job of investigative reporting. In a 6,500-word exposé, Corry detailed how Kosinski had been the target of a KGB disinformation campaign for years, with the active collaboration of the New York liberal elite. The same establishment journalists who called Kosinski a liar gave Corry a lot of flak for his exposé.

DONALD R. HOLM
PORT TOWNSEND, WA

Democracy in Nicaragua

In his article "Remember Nicaragua?" (Mar. 25), Robert Kagan clearly brings to light the evident strategic failure and lack of ideological substance of current American foreign policy. With fragile democracies springing up in many ex-socialist states, the United States finds itself in a position to strengthen and fully establish the ideals of liberty and democracy, ideals that many Americans have died for.

In present-day Nicaragua, American lives don't have to be risked to promote these ideals. Kagan correctly points out that all this Central American country needs now to guarantee a continuation of democracy is "a watchful eye."

The United States spent billions of dollars waging a military and ideological war against communism. It is incomprehensible why it now refuses to spend a minimal amount of time and energy to ensure that these same ideals take root in politically fragile countries like Nicaragua.

Now that many of these countries are seemingly ideologically compatible with U.S. interests, any type of aid would go farther than ever before in promoting development and stabilizing the region (and would be much cheaper than having to go back years later to finance opposition guerrilla forces).

Kagan is misguided, however, in crediting Nicaragua's transition to democracy in 1990 to U.S. policy during the Reagan administration. In fact, the specific U.S. policy of supporting the contras was a partial, if not total, failure. The Sandinistas in Nicaragua agreed to hold elections in 1990 as a result of a peace plan put forth by the then-president of Costa Rica, Oscar Arias, a plan opposed by the United States all along.

Reagan did not think that the Sandinistas would peacefully acquiesce to holding elections, and thought that the only way to oust Daniel Ortega was through military force.

The contras were practically disbanded after Congress refused to continue funding them, and Ortega himself signed the U.S.-opposed peace agreement along with the other Central American presidents.

U.S. policy, then, although unwavering and ideologically consistent, had little direct influence in Nicaragua's transition to democracy.

JUAN CARLOS ROJAS
ARLINGTON, VA

Christian from the Inside

As a Christian, I would love to believe that every founding father was also a Christian. But history shows that this is not the case. For example, despite his support of many Christian ideas, Thomas Jefferson most likely would have labeled himself a Deist. Marvin Olasky points to Jefferson as a role model for a modern presidential candidate ("A 19th-Century Campaign," April 1).

Olasky's theory is that the electorate should not "worry so much about the innermost convictions of candidates, but emphasize their public commitments."

While there is some merit to this argument, there is also danger.

A Christian has his or her convictions based on the rock of God's word. A person who publicly espouses Christian standards, but has no foundation upon which those beliefs are built, is subject to the winds of compromise. A danger of relying solely on the public commitment of a candidate, instead of also looking at his innermost convictions, is that what's public today may not be public tomorrow.

Olasky states that even though Jefferson rejected the divinity of Jesus Christ he supported many of the things important to Christians. Jefferson, of course, was a man of unique character. The danger is when an occupant of the White House does not have strength of character or integrity.

GREGORY GIORDANO
NEW PORT RICHEY, FL

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Correspondence

Real Diversity Wins

Your editorial "Diversity Strikes Out" (April 1) presented a coherent overview of the issues and impact of the *Hopwood* v. *Texas* appeals court decision.

However, the editorial accepts uncritically the notion that diversity is a racial issue. But this is the very idea the court stuck down. Hard.

The opinion reads, "[T]he use of ethnic diversity simply to achieve racial heterogeneity . . . is unconstitutional." The court denies that mere racial heterogeneity is constitutionally justified diversity. Racial goals or "aspirations" like those of the University of Texas law school aim for a shallow kind of diversity.

Real diversity does not break down along lines of race. Instead, it considers the experiences, ideas, and aspirations of applicants, for which race is a poor proxy.

The *Hopwood* decision strikes a blow for diversity insofar as it will force admissions committees to work harder to admit truly diverse applicants. It should also encourage conservatives to stop following the liberal lead in pretending that mere racial heterogeneity constitutes the desirable commingling of differences we call diversity.

MARK CHENOWETH
NEW HAVEN, CT

Assisting a Humane Death

Your editorial on euthanasia addresses only half the subject ("Euthanasia Horror," Mar. 25). We need to explore the reasons why so many people are seeking to end their lives in such a manner. Have they been the beneficiaries of one too many "life-saving" procedures? Have their lives been prolonged to the point of agony in order to satisfy the conscience of family members?

Death is the ultimate fact of life, yet modern medicine is willing to go to extraordinary lengths to keep a patient alive even if that life is only an illusion. This eagerness to keep the patient alive at all costs may be the reason that so many people are seeking an assisted death.

ANNE M. GOLONKA
LAS VEGAS, NV

Kemp for Vice President

I am fascinated by your continued attempt to discredit Jack Kemp ("Patron of Lost Causes," Scrapbook, April 1). One can only assume that Kemp is once again becoming a threat to those in Washington who do not really want to see dramatic change.

Kemp is vice-presidential material. Sen. Dole would do well to choose a running mate who is an articulate, nationally known conservative. Kemp can combine an optimistic pro-growth, flat-tax message with a solid pro-life stance on abortion and can attract minority voters.

A Dole-Kemp ticket would undoubtedly cut into President Clinton's base while shoring up Sen. Dole's somewhat shaky conservative standing. But then again, the senator could please the elite of the Washington-New York media, pick Colin Powell, and reelect Bill Clinton.

PAUL J. PERRONE
SPRINGFIELD, VA

Second-Rank Lawyer, Esq.

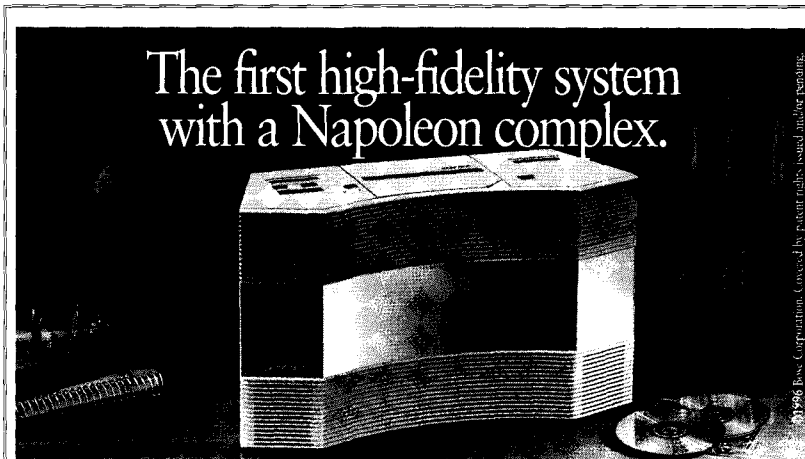
John Podhoretz was entirely correct in his criticism of those "lawyers of the second rank" who arrogantly add "Esq." to their names ("Mau-Mauing the Flacks," Mar. 11).

Frederick L. Simmons's explanation of the etymology of "esquire" (Correspondence, April 1) does not go far enough.

By the 18th century, the title "Esquire" could be used by any gentleman. It was never limited to lawyers. Even today, any gentleman can be addressed with "Esq." whether he is a lawyer or not.

Podhoretz was also correct in noting the "comic use" of "Esq." by women attorneys. The great number of women who have entered the profession and use "Esq." to identify themselves as lawyers shows the inappropriateness of "esquire" as an exclusive title for attorneys.

WILLIAM T. BARRANTE
WATERTOWN, CT



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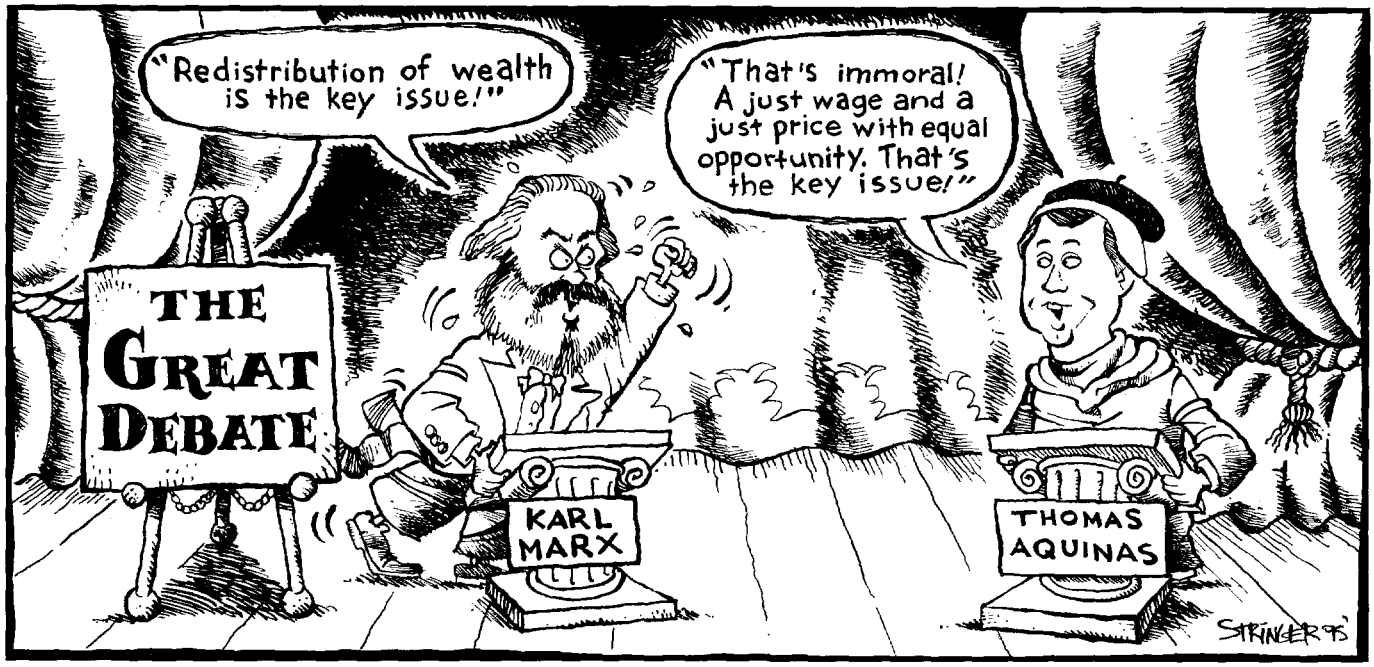

The economic dangers of class warfare

Anyone reading Marx knows he was a bitter, jealous man. He framed every injustice or inequity in the context of a class struggle—against wealth. Reinforcing this was his first-hand observation of the British "long lease." One hundred-year leases tied up property, preventing its passage to the middle class, causing many to flee to America—the land of (ownership) opportunity.

Redistribution or concentration of capital?

Class warfare has once again reared its head without consideration for its true economic consequences. The only economist to be canonized, Saint Thomas Aquinas, spoke out about the evils of attempting to redistribute wealth. He saw such philosophies as immoral and dangerous. He counseled equal *opportunity* with a just wage and a just price—not equality of wealth!

The concentration of wealth is a natural process of economic growth, benefiting society as a whole. The lack of capital concentration was the hallmark of the Dark Ages. Similar folly is Europe's Marxist socialism, which brands individuality, hard work, and success an evil to be tempered and controlled. The results are economic growth rates below 2.5 percent for nearly 30 years and chronic unemployment at 12 percent or more due to social, not prosperity, goals.

Entrepreneurial brilliance or design by committee?

When wealth is concentrated, investment decisions are more easily reached. When consensus is required, entrepreneurial fires are doused. Henry Ford reported to no one when he risked all on an assembly line, propelling America to the top of world productivity. Under Soviet central committees planning, economic hardship and stagnation dominated, thanks to Marx.

Aquinas' just wages & prices—the basics of economic freedom

Guaranteeing freedom of opportunity while preventing unfair monopolies or restricting competition is paramount. We must restore Aquinas' goal of a just wage and a just price. If we focus on these goals, then prosperity will result, rather than stagnation and jealousy.

Indirect taxation—a first step to renewed opportunity

Marx sparked class warfare; our government continues his plan via graduated income taxes. Freedom begins with less government intrusion through indirect taxation—not more aggressive enforcement of direct, income taxation.

We need reform rejecting Marxism forever: Fair indirect, consumption taxes ending personal income taxes as the Constitution intended.

For more information on the Princeton Proposal for tax reform & economic growth, contact:

Princeton Economic Institute
214 Carnegie Center, Suite 303
Princeton, New Jersey 08540-6237
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the weekly Standard

Let's Have A Fight About Judges

On August 18, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit ruled that a U.S. District Court had inadequately considered the Eighth Amendment claims of one Josephine Brown. Brown is a transsexual prison inmate who argued that Colorado's refusal to provide her with estrogen and other medical therapy necessary to the maintenance of her gender identity constituted cruel and unusual punishment. The Tenth Circuit decision in Brown's favor was written by Judge Robert Henry. Judge Henry was placed on the federal bench by President Clinton.

Hmmm.

Republicans are eager to use the president's judicial appointees against him in the coming campaign. It's a perfectly legitimate device, in our view. It's also one the White House is eager to neutralize, as the recent brushfire of partisan back-and-forth over Judge Harold Baer makes clear. Baer is the Clinton-nominated district court judge who ruled that a 40-minute videotaped confession and $4 million of seized cocaine and heroin were inadmissible evidence at a drug trial because the five suspects in the case had been arrested illegally. Their flight from New York City police, Baer initially decided (he has now reversed himself), fell short of "probable cause." In Manhattan's Washington Heights neighborhood, the judge wrote, police are viewed as "corrupt, abusive and violent." So running away from the cops is rational, not suspicious.

REPUBLICANS ARE EAGER TO USE CLINTON'S JUDGES AGAINST HIM. IT'S A PERFECTLY LEGITIMATE DEVICE, IN OUR VIEW.

A genuinely loopy and offensive conclusion, to be sure. And the Clinton administration, its damage-control antennae vibrating convulsively, wanted nothing to do with it. On March 21, unwilling to wait for the judge to reconsider his ruling, the White House made the astonishing announcement that the president might seek Baer's resignation if he failed to change his mind. And two days later, not to be outdone, Bob Dole said Baer "ought to be impeached."

Federal judges serve for life, of course, and their evidentiary rulings, however stupid, are never "high crimes and misdemeanors," the only grounds for impeachment the Constitution allows. Nevertheless, we have learned something important from this rather clumsy inter-party skirmish. We know that Bill Clinton's judgeships *will* be an issue in this year's presidential campaign; the White House "threat" against Harold Baer was front-page news across the country. And we know that the president has constructed his defense against the charge that a more expansive (i.e., liberal) vision might soon control the federal courts—with unpopular consequences—should he win in November.

Clinton and his men contend that Republicans have no standing to criticize administration judicial appointments since Republican senators have opposed almost none of the judges in question during confirmation proceedings on Capitol Hill. There have been 185 Clinton appointments to the district, circuit, and Supreme courts. All but four have won voice-vote approval in the Senate, and only two have earned significant Republican opposition: Rosemary Barkett, now on the Eleventh Circuit, and H. Lee Sarokin, now serving on the Third. How, the White House pointedly asks, can the GOP now complain about Baer—or any other judge who moved so easily through confirmation?

This is a decent talking point. But it's not much of

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an argument. Granted, lifetime service on the bench is a bigger deal than a temporary job as assistant secretary of education, and the Senate's "advice and consent" responsibility is at its weightiest where judicial nominations are concerned. But the tradition of congressional deference to presidential appointment powers should, and does, extend to the courts. And under the guidance of Judiciary Committee chairman Orrin Hatch, the Republican Senate has been admirably—maybe even excessively—respectful of that tradition, for practical as much as philosophical reasons.

In an average four-year presidential term, roughly a quarter of all federal judgeships become vacant. Such turnover typically involves more than 160 judicial positions at the district court level, where the vast bulk of federal casework is performed. The sheer volume of nominations necessary to keep these courts functioning makes close Senate scrutiny of appointees almost impossible. In other words, Senate Republican approval of President Clinton's district court nominees hardly means that the GOP has pre-certified those judges' rulings. Except in the rarest circumstances, senators know that a president's lower-court nominees are at least minimally qualified—*and little else.*

But isn't greater Senate attention to the more important federal appellate courts possible and necessary? Yes, but here the president has acted deliberately to squelch nomination conflicts. There have been no Barketts or Sarokins since Republicans took control of the Senate; Clinton's post-1994 circuit court nominees are low-profile lawyers without controversial backgrounds or potentially embarrassing paper trails. "We've steered clear of a few people who might have been fabulous judges but who would have provoked a fight that we were likely to lose," says the administration's chief judge-picker at the Department of Justice.

Until recently, the president's fear of Senate wrath on major court appointments has irked liberal judicial activists. "My concern with the administration is its reluctance to engage the public in any debates about judgeships," Alliance for Justice chief Nan Aron told *Legal Times* last September. "Win or lose, it's good for the country to hear what the president thinks about the courts." Nicely put. But Bill Clinton is always more interested in results than principle. In practice, Nan Aron's liberalism depends above all on a maintenance of America's jurisprudential status quo. Brilliant jurists—"Scalias of the left"—might be nice. But bodies, votes on the courts, are really all you need. And bodies are what Clinton has nominated, bodies that Senate Republicans have not really been able to oppose.

IT IS SIMPLY NOT TRUE THAT CLINTON-APPOINTED JURISTS HAVE PROVED TO BE A PURELY "MODERATE, MAINSTREAM GROUP," AS THE *NEW YORK TIMES* PUT IT IN A "NEWS ANALYSIS."

It is simply not true, as a *New York Times* "news analysis" has it, that Baer "is an anomaly," that Clinton-appointed jurists have proved to be a purely "moderate, mainstream group" whose opinions will frustrate "Republican record-checkers" looking for campaign ammunition this year. Dozens of opinions and dissents by these judges—like the Tenth Circuit ruling on Josephine Brown—are already circulating in conservative legal circles. Some look quite juicy. The Clinton administration worries over this prospect and threatens to retaliate with a "so's-your-mother" collection of comparably unattractive rulings by judges appointed during the Reagan and Bush years.

Fine, we say: Let's see the list and have that debate Nan Aron once claimed she sought. Of course, these days Aron has changed her tune: "There's no need for the administration to engage in a discussion that is such a threat to judicial independence," she now suggests. And "responsible" opinion is in her corner. Partisan politicking about the courts "is very sad," the *Times*'s editorial page intones. "Reasoned debate about judicial conduct is virtually impossible during election years, which lend themselves to intellectual intemperance."

So prissy. And so contemptuous of the American voter's ability to make an intelligent judgment about, and exercise his democratic influence over, the third branch of our government. This year's presidential campaign will have a lasting effect on the makeup of the federal judiciary. It may have no greater effect. If Clinton is reelected, Democratically-appointed judges will, by the time he leaves office, once again dominate the appeals courts. And the philosophical alignment of the Supreme Court, now split 5-4 on a series of politically sensitive issues—affirmative action, term limits, religion, federalism, and so on—may well be reversed.

A national conversation about such matters is nothing to be afraid of. That conversation may be possible *only* during a presidential election. Both parties should have at it. There are far dumber and less consequential things they could be talking about.

—David Tell, for the Editors

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SHOOTING STARR

by Fred Barnes

THERE'S A NIFTY DIVISION OF LABOR at the Clinton White House for handling the public relations side of the Whitewater scandal. "As a general proposition, I try to stay out of it," says Mike McCurry, President Clinton's press secretary. If he agreed to answer questions about Whitewater routinely, McCurry adds, "I'd very quickly do nothing else." And Whitewater would be a bigger story. Besides, he'd lose his effectiveness as the administration's spokesman on foreign affairs, domestic policy, and other matters. He'd become Clinton's Whitewater shill. So the job of talking about Whitewater has fallen to Mark Fabiani, a genial lawyer in the White House counsel's office. Oddly enough, he's popular with reporters because, unlike some Clinton aides, he returns phone calls.

This arrangement has worked swimmingly for the White House, particularly if judged by the dwindling interest in Whitewater by the Washington press corps. One reason is McCurry and Fabiani have been careful in picking fights. They've gone after Republican senator Al D'Amato, chairman of the Senate Whitewater Committee, who is loathed by the media. Fabiani trashes D'Amato as a crassly partisan tool of Bob Dole's presidential campaign and insists there's no reason to continue public hearings. As for David Hale, the ex-judge in Little Rock who's accused Clinton of pressuring him to make an illegal $300,000 loan, even McCurry pipes up ("false allegations"). Fabiani contends Hale concocted the story in hopes of getting a lighter sentence for his own wrongdoing.

Kenneth Starr

Kent Lemon

In dealing with *Blood Sport*, the bestselling Whitewater book by journalist James Stewart, and independent counsel Kenneth Starr, the White House team has been more subtle. McCurry is gently critical of *Blood Sport*, arguing Stewart produces nothing new. But he's also lobbied reporters to read an anti-Stewart screed by Garry Wills in the *New York Review of Books* that says Stewart was duped by James McDougal, the partner of the Clintons in the Whitewater development.

The approach to Starr is even more indirect. No one at the White House attacks Starr publicly. The last thing the president wants is a public spat with the special prosecutor. That would trigger extensive news coverage and revive Whitewater as a major story. Still, the White House would like to discredit Starr. So when asked about Starr, Fabiani sends reporters clips about the prosecutor's alleged conflicts of interest. At least partly as a result, the conflict story has gotten considerable press attention.

The problem for Starr is that he's kept up his private law practice while directing the Whitewater investigation. Independent counsels are allowed to do this, and many have. The idea, after all, is to attract nationally recognized attorneys skilled in white-collar crime cases. Forced to abandon their practices, many top lawyers would be unwilling to serve as special prosecutors. Nonetheless, some of Starr's admirers believe he should devote full time to Whitewater because it's an investigation of the president, not a peripheral government figure. Otherwise, he's bound to invite more criticism for slighting his duties as independent counsel in order to make money.

Starr's special burden is that the private cases he's handled are "all high profile," says Joseph diGenova, the former U.S. attorney for Washington, D.C., and himself a former independent counsel. Starr represents tobacco companies in a high-stakes liability case and the state of Wisconsin in litigation defending a school choice program. And his law firm, Kirkland & Ellis, worked out the settlement of a suit by the Resolution Trust Corporation as Starr was probing RTC officials on Whitewater.

It's a stretch to maintain that Starr's work on these cases involves real conflicts of interest. The argument in the tobacco case is that Starr, by representing Brown & Williamson, has an additional incentive to go after Clinton aggressively. Why? Well, Brown & Williamson and other tobacco companies don't like the Clinton administration's attack on smoking. By this reasoning, if Starr represented a manufacturer—

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or had in the past and might in the future—he'd have a conflict because manufacturing companies are upset with Clinton's veto of product liability reform. Just as tenuous is the case for a conflict in the school choice dispute. There, the argument is that Starr, hired as a constitutional expert by the Bradley Foundation, then as a litigator by the state of Wisconsin, is compromised by his connection to Bradley. Why? Among its many grantees is the *American Spectator*, which has run articles sharply critical of Clinton. Sam Dash, the former Senate Watergate Committee counsel and Starr's ethics adviser, is right in concluding this hardly taints Starr as biased against Clinton. Dash is a Democrat.

More serious is the supposed conflict with the RTC. Since the RTC has sued Kirkland & Ellis over its representation of a savings and loan, there's a built-in conflict for Starr in investigating that agency. That's the theory, anyway, as laid out in a breathless article in the *Nation*. But thousands of prominent lawyers would be ineligible as Whitewater counsel under this theory, since the RTC has sued more than 500 law firms that worked for S&Ls in the 1980s. Also, the legal work occurred before Starr joined the firm. Starr "was walled off from the case," says senior partner Jack S. Levin, and his name was never mentioned in negotiations between the firm and the RTC. Dash found no conflict, and there's no evidence of one. Thus, the notion of an actual conflict dissolves. But the possible appearance of a conflict leaves Starr with a PR problem.

The effort to discredit Starr has already taken a toll. He feels embattled, and he'll be all the more vulnerable if Arkansas governor Jim Guy Tucker and Jim and Susan McDougal are acquitted in the Little Rock trial in which Hale is their chief accuser. Then, Starr can expect noisy demands that he wrap up his investigation since his star witness, Hale, isn't credible. We'll be reminded by Fabiani and others that Hale is the only person who has directly implicated Clinton in criminal wrongdoing. Should Starr proceed with Whitewater, he'd be accused of being driven by partisanship, not independent judgment. Of course, should Starr win convictions of Tucker and the McDougals, his hand would be strengthened, Hale's credibility enhanced, and Whitewater revived as a newsworthy issue.

Absent that, Starr won't entirely fade away. It turns out the administration is not of one mind on Starr. Attorney General Janet Reno got a three-judge court on March 22 to broaden Starr's investigation to include Travelgate. That means real trouble for Hillary Rodham Clinton, former White House aide David Watkins, or both. Mrs. Clinton told a congressional committee she'd had nothing to do with the firing of White House travel office employees in 1993. Watkins has testified he fired them because he had been advised, though not by the first lady directly, that this was what she wanted. Whether the White House likes it or not, Starr now has the task of discovering who's lying. ♦

Rookies of the Year

by Matthew Rees

Four weeks ago, Congress was on the brink of passing radical immigration reform. Legislation sponsored by Sen. Alan Simpson of Wyoming and Rep. Lamar Smith of Texas would have beefed up controls on illegal immigration and dramatically reduced legal immigration. But when the House easily passed its immigration bill on March 21, the most restrictive provisions had been stripped away or defeated. And the reforms outlined in the Senate bill, which comes to the floor April 15, have been considerably scaled back.

What happened? Simply put, four freshmen Republicans—Sen. Spencer Abraham of Michigan and Reps. Sam Brownback of Kansas, Steve Chabot of Ohio, and Dick Chrysler of Michigan—waged an insurgent campaign to prevent their party from passing the most restrictive immigration legislation since the National Origins Quota Act of 1924. The result was the rout of two senior Republicans—Simpson and Smith—long obsessed with immigration. That it was freshmen who stepped into the vacuum underscores the unorthodox ways of the class of '94, including their willingness to challenge Congress's seniority system.

When the immigration bills were introduced last year, they seemed likely to pass. Simpson and Smith, popular with their colleagues, were the chief immigration spokesmen for an emboldened party. They also had public opinion on their side (witness the success of Proposition 187 in California, denying benefits to illegal immigrants). Few Republicans focused on the Simpson/Smith legislation, which sailed through the requisite subcommittees with little fanfare.

The first red flag for the four freshmen, and the first indication Simpson and Smith had overreached, was their proposal for a Draconian worker verification

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system. This would have required all employers to check every new employee's immigration status with a new government agency. Abraham and Brownback wrote in the *Washington Times* that this would be costly and ineffective. Chabot was alarmed by government intrusion in the workplace and possible infringement of civil liberties. But Chabot's his amendment to eliminate the verification system lost in the Judiciary Committee. "That defeat reminded us we had a tough fight ahead," recalls Rick Swartz, a pro-immigration organizer.

Immigration sat on the back burner during the autumn budget scrum, and it was only on December 19 that Abraham announced his opposition to the Simpson bill. The announcement came after the senator learned of a provision in the legislation barring immigrants who had become U.S. citizens from bringing in members of their immediate families; other provisions entailed new taxes and regulations. Abraham, whose grandparents came to Michigan from Lebanon, had met with Simpson in November to let it be known that he "had a different perspective."

Abraham spent much of January and February lobbying his colleagues on the Judiciary Committee, but the irascible Simpson employed a heavy-handed strategy. At the end of a tense hearing on February 29, Abraham tried to offer an amendment splitting the bill's provisions on legal immigration from those addressing illegal immigration (a move strongly favored by immigration supporters, since lumping the two together tended to ease passage of restrictions on legal immigration, when illegal immigration was the real target).

A visibly angered Simpson charged that it was "inappropriate to recognize the junior member of the committee" and mischievously asked the chairman, Orrin Hatch, who was running the meeting, the chairman or his staff. Hatch was furious, but backed off and denied Abraham his amendment.

Though Abraham lost that battle, it was Simpson who was now on the defensive. During the next two weeks, Abraham continued to work with two other committee members—Mike DeWine, an Ohio Republican, and Russ Feingold, a Wisconsin Democrat—to build support for splitting the bill. The group won over a number of wavering senators—most important, Hatch—and on March 14 the committee voted 12-6 to divide the Simpson bill. This was a major blow to Simpson (he still hopes to unite the bills on the Senate floor), and Abraham's performance did not go unnoticed.

"Spence was the glue that held together a somewhat fragile alliance under tremendous pressure from a skilled legislator like Simpson," says Frank Sharry, an Abraham ally at the Washington-based National Immigration Forum.

While Abraham waited until December to highlight the Simpson bill's shortcomings, he was ahead of his House counterparts, who didn't get involved until a month before the House vote. Congressional staff played a key role in publicizing problems with the Smith bill and beginning the mobilization. Brownback's legislative director, Paul Ryan, was lobbied by his counterpart in Abraham's office, Cesar Conda. The two had been colleagues at the Alexis de Tocqueville Institution, where they had worked on immigration issues, and Conda persuaded Ryan to take a closer look at the Smith bill.

Before long, Brownback, Chabot, and Chrysler, all of whom had pro-immigration instincts, put seniority concerns aside and threw themselves into a high-intensity campaign to defeat the Smith bill. They worked closely with Democrats such as Rep. Howard Berman and with a motley crew of interest groups ranging from the National Association of Manufacturers to the AFL-CIO. The flurry of activity included distributing over a dozen "Dear Colleague" letters that refuted Smith's immigration-related data and highlighted some of his bill's anti-family provisions. As many as 50 people attended bipartisan staff briefings (rare in this session of Congress), where figures like former conservative GOP senator Malcolm Wallop spoke.

The campaign was also boosted by numerous pro-immigration editorials and op-eds published in the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Washington Times*. Yet the House leadership was silent during this period, and there was occasional grumbling that Majority Leader Dick Armey and Judiciary Committee chairman Henry Hyde, both of whom have strong pro-immigration credentials, were excessively deferential to Smith.

But the freshmen's spadework paid off. On March 21, an amendment to keep legal immigration at current levels passed with a 55-vote margin. And so many restrictive provisions were struck from Smith's bill that all three maverick freshmen ended up supporting it in the full House. Stuart Anderson, an immigration analyst at the Cato Institute and an informal adviser to those campaigning against the Smith bill, characterized the vote as a "remarkable, come-from-behind victory that wouldn't have been possible if the freshmen hadn't taken the initiative."

True, and not least remarkable was that none of the freshmen insurgents had any real political reason to stand up for immigrants. Brownback, Chrysler, and Chabot all represent districts with small immigrant

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communities; nor does immigration generate much passion in Abraham's Michigan.

So why wage a fight that angers some of the party elders and contributes to Republican disarray? Because, says Brownback, "this was the right thing to do." ♦

Outed from the Cold

by John E. Haynes and Harvey Klehr

Theodore Hall was a physics prodigy at Harvard, graduating at age 19. The year was 1944. He was immediately scooped up by the Manhattan Project and sent to Los Alamos to work on the atomic bomb. But he was also a member of the Young Communist League and soon he was recruited by another organization: the Soviet intelligence service. While in New Mexico, he passed nuclear secrets to Stalin's government.

After the war ended, Hall left weapons-related research and eventually moved to Great Britain. His espionage was unknown to the public until February of this year, when the *Washington Post* reported the story on the front page. Hall, who is 76 and in poor health, told the press that he wanted no hubbub. He wanted only to finish out his life in peace.

While this may be understandable, peace should not come easily to Hall and others like him, who have been exposed at last by the American government's release of the "Venona files": deciphered World War II cables between Soviet intelligence officers in America and their superiors in Moscow. Although more than half of the 2,200 files will not be made available until later this year, the ones already public reveal a massive Soviet network devoted to spying on the United States, the Soviets' wartime ally.

Officers of the NKVD—predecessor to the KGB—worked diligently to ferret out America's military, diplomatic, and technological secrets. Along with the names of NKVD professionals, the Venona messages contain cover-names for about 200 others who participated in espionage for the Soviet Union. Clues in the messages allowed American counterintelligence to identify about half of those spies. Most were American citizens (chiefly members of the Communist party), with a scattering of refugees from Europe.

The government in Washington decided early that Venona had to be kept secret, to prevent the Soviets from learning the extent of American success in cracking what Moscow believed to be an unbreakable cipher system. This meant that evidence from Venona could not be used in court. In a few cases, government authorities were able to develop enough independent evidence to bring criminal charges against spies found out through Venona. These spies include Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, Harry Gold, David Greenglass, Morton Sobell, William Perl, Alger Hiss, Judith Coplon, Mark Zborowski, Jack Soble, Robert Soblen, and Klaus Fuchs. Another spy identified in Venona, Elizabeth Bentley, turned herself in and testified fully. Several others, such as Alfred Stern and Jane Foster, were indicted but fled the country, escaping trial. These,

Michael Ramirez

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however, were the exceptions. Scores of other spies were never prosecuted, thanks to the judgment that the secrecy of Venona outweighed individual justice.

But the Cold War is over and Venona is no longer secret. It is time for an accounting.

Most of those identified as Soviet spies have died, paying no legal penalty. Some (a minority) were accused during the "McCarthy era" of having been spies, and they either indignantly denied the charges or refused to answer them, citing the Fifth Amendment. While they often lost government jobs and were criticized in the press, they had the satisfaction of seeing their accusers denounced as "red-baiters" and "McCarthyites." The historical consensus was—and to a large extent remains—that accusations concerning internal security were part of a climate of fear, when America abandoned its most precious values. In this view, many devoted, loyal government employees were hounded out by baseless charges. Venona, however, demonstrates that a number of these "martyrs" did, indeed, betray the United States.

MANY WHO SPIED FOR THE SOVIETS HAVE DIED. BUT SOME ARE STILL AMONG US.

Three of the spies convicted are still alive: Morton Sobell, Alger Hiss, and Judith Coplon. (Coplon was convicted twice, but both convictions were reversed on technicalities. Had prosecutors been able to use the Venona documents—in which she is frequently and clearly identified as a Soviet agent—she would have been imprisoned. She is now running a trendy restaurant in New York.) There are others who were never tried and whose guilt at this point is indisputable. Among these living and unpunished spies are Victor Perlo, Harry Magdoff, Donald Niven Wheeler, Joel Barr, and the aforementioned Theodore Hall.

Venona shows that Victor Perlo was not only a spy but the head of a network of concealed Communists. His group had informants in the War Production Board, the Treasury Department, the Senate Committee on War Mobilization, and the Office of Strategic Services (predecessor to the CIA). One message from the Soviets' New York consulate to NKVD headquarters described how Perlo was to make periodic trips to New York to drop off documents collected by his network. He provided information on America's first operational jet fighter, plans for the production of military equipment, and internal government estimates of postwar U.S. economic prospects.

Today, Perlo is an open and prominent member of what is left of the U.S. Communist party. He was never indicted for his spying, though he was forced from his job in the Treasury Department. He portrays himself, and has been portrayed by others, as an innocent victim of anti-Communist paranoia. His accusers, on the other hand—particularly Elizabeth Bentley—have been portrayed as liars. A few years ago, the Left's leading journal, the *Nation*, published an article by its editor, Victor Navasky, referring to Perlo not as a Communist or a spy but as a "New Deal economist."

Harry Magdoff was a spy who worked with Perlo when the two were on the staff of the War Production Board. Magdoff, according to Venona, shared the duty of ferrying materials to New York. He was fingered by Bentley as a fellow spy. He pleaded the Fifth and was never indicted, but he did lose his job with the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee. Like Perlo, he had been a secret member of the Communist party. At some point, he quietly left and became an editor of *Monthly Review*, a Marxist journal that, while independent of the party, admired Soviet communism. Magdoff has never admitted involvement with Soviet intelligence. He, too, has been portrayed as a victim of an anti-Communist witch hunt. He remains an editor at *Monthly Review*.

Donald Niven Wheeler was another member of the Perlo network, burrowed in the Office of Strategic Services. Venona reveals that Wheeler supplied the Soviets with information on the British intelligence service. Moscow must have been pleased with his work, for it ordered Wheeler to prepare a report on the OSS's own counterintelligence branch. After he was named by Bentley, Wheeler refused to testify. He was never indicted. In the ensuing decades, he has ridiculed the notion that he had any links whatever to Soviet intelligence. The Venona documents prove that he was just what Bentley said he was. He lives in retirement after a career as an economics professor at American and Canadian colleges.

Joel Barr worked in the laboratories of the U.S. Army Signal Corps. In 1942, the army discovered his Communist connections and discharged him. But the wartime need for electrical engineers was great, and Barr quickly landed a job at Western Electric Company working on advanced military radar systems. After the war, he worked for Sperry Gyroscope, again on military radar. His background caught up with him, however, and he lost his security clearance, and his job, in 1947.

Barr was living in Paris in 1950 when the press announced that the FBI had arrested David Greenglass, the brother-in-law of Barr's old associate Julius Rosenberg. Barr promptly disappeared from his apartment. He left behind his clothing, his newly purchased motorcycle, and all of his other belongings. Decades later, he surfaced in the Soviet Union under a

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new name, working as a senior engineer on military electronics. He now maintains residences in New York and St. Petersburg and promotes the sale of electrical processes developed in Russia. He has steadfastly denied involvement in espionage and attributes his disappearance in 1950 to the poisonous atmosphere of the McCarthy era. Venona confirms that Barr was no victim.

And Theodore Hall, the Harvard physics whiz? When the government approached him about joining a secret project, he confided in his roommate, Saville Sax, a fellow Communist, who promptly contacted high officials in the party. Anatoly Yakovlev, an NKVD officer operating with diplomatic status, interviewed Sax, and then sent a covert agent, Sergei Kurnakov, to meet Hall. (Kurnakov was a Russian immigrant who wrote for the Communist *Daily Worker*.) Kurnakov secured Hall's cooperation and arranged for the young physicist to deliver reports to a courier.

That courier was Leontine Cohen, an American Communist who became a career Soviet spy. She and her husband Morris were later imprisoned in Britain as part of a Soviet network that penetrated the British admiralty. They served about five years before the KGB exchanged them for a British agent in Soviet hands. The Cohens retired on Soviet pensions in Moscow, where they both died.

To Hall, nothing ever happened. The FBI was unable to develop evidence against him independent of Venona. He lived unnoticed and undisturbed until the press showed up on his doorstep a couple of months ago and he made his request for peace.

But his crimes—and those of Perlo, Wheeler, Barr, and Magdoff—should not be forgotten. These men betrayed the United States and the rest of the Free World. They abetted a totalitarian and expansionist state ruled by Josef Stalin. They lied about what they did. They defamed those who spoke truthfully about what they did. They allowed others, too, to malign the truth-tellers. They contributed to the miseducation of millions by helping to perpetuate the illusion that it was hysteria, not real evidence of treachery, that prompted the hunt for spies in the early years of the "twilight struggle."

Yet even if it were legally possibly, it would seem inappropriate to prosecute these spies now. They are old; they committed their crimes 50 years ago. Nevertheless, the passage of time should not relieve them of the responsibility to account for their acts. Nor should their countrymen—journalists and historians in particular—ignore the dishonorable and villainous conduct of the spies still among us.

John E. Haynes is author of **Red Scare or Red Menace? American Communism and Anticommunism in the Cold War Era** *and Harvey Klehr is author (with Ronald Radosh) of* **The Amerasia Spy Case: Prelude to McCarthyism.**

THE MANCHU STRIKES BACK

by Charles Horner

AS A CENTURY UNKIND TO IMPERIALISM draws to a close, it is interesting that in at least one country the imperial spirit may be stirring once again. Of course, we have not been in the habit of thinking of China as an empire, even though the collapse of its last ruling house in 1912 presaged what was about to happen to the Romanovs, Hapsburgs, and Hohenzollerns in Europe.

In another 30 years or so, the surviving British and French empires would also expire. And what good is the title without the territory? The emperor of Japan may head the oldest imperial household in the world, but his empire, too, is long gone, and there is no prospect that he will get it back. Even the most fearsome empire of all—the Evil Empire itself—now dwells in the dustbin of history.

Given these dour precedents and all they imply for how things tend to come out in the end, should we be surprised that China, right now, uniquely among the great nations, is trying to make itself bigger, not smaller, more consequential, not less; that it is more inclined to take on the world than to withdraw from it? We may be in the habit of regarding the Chinese as aloof and ethnocentric, but today's China is the product of imperialism and cosmopolitanism on a grand scale. For what we think of as "China" is really the Manchu empire, a creation of the 17th and 18th centuries, so solidly constructed that its achievements and pretensions are still powerful.

The Manchus are the least heralded and most underappreciated of the world's great empire builders; only the Mongols surpassed them in the assemblage of contiguous territories. Indeed, when the last Manchu child-emperor abdicated in 1912, he handed over to the successor republic a China about twice the size of the one his forebears had initially acquired. To China proper they had added Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, Tibet, and Chinese Turkestan. In Inner Asia, where

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nearer regions merge into farther ones, the outer boundary of Chinese power was always imprecise; the empire's power flowed as far as it could, like a river that eventually disappears into the desert. So today's China can take up the task where it was left, and it is unsurprising to find an active Chinese presence in the new Central Asian republics, Pakistan, Iran, and the core of the Middle East. The Manchus also incorporated Taiwan in the late 17th century, a base for expanding maritime power.

The greatest of the Manchu emperors, Ch'ien-lung (1711-1799, reigned 1736-1796) built on previous conquests and his own so that the Manchus were held in awe throughout Southeast Asia, Korea, and sometimes beyond. Ch'ien-lung was, to be sure, the emperor of China, but, great as China was, he thought of himself as a kind of transnational, "multiethnic" figure. It is ironic, therefore, that Westerners should recall him, if at all, as the emperor who, in 1793, instructed impudent emissaries of the king of England about China's self-sufficiency and uninterest in commerce. No matter: The Republic of China in Taiwan and the People's Republic of China in Beijing for decades have claimed every square inch of the Manchu patrimony, including the territory the Manchus ceded to the Russians when the dynasty was in decline. Vladivostok is just one example of the latter; as the Chinese and their commerce seep into the region, it is only a matter of time before it is reabsorbed into its empire of origin. This may take a long while, but then Chinese expansionism has always preferred irreversible results to merely conspicuous ones.

China's Manchu rulers also understood that while military prowess could create empire, more was necessary to sustain it. Thus, they came to believe in what we would call cultural imperialism. They promoted Chinese thought about art, philosophy, and governance in the belief that the acceptance of these ideas in East and Southeast Asia would produce natural acquiescence in China's hegemony and, therefore, in their own.

But we are not used to associating Chinese ideas with Chinese power. The 1950s and 1960s, for example, were a time of energetic Chinese involvement in the affairs of the region—intervention in the Korean war; support of "wars of national liberation" in Malaya, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and the Philippines; and a spectacular near miss at a pro-Chinese coup in Indonesia in 1965. All of these had a Communist and not a Confucian gloss, which made them so much a part of the Cold War that it was difficult to see them as a separate Chinese phenomenon.

Among the Chinese themselves, the expansion of their influence has become increasingly associated with notions of Chinese solidarity. Old-fashioned Manchu/Chinese internationalism did not extend to Chinese living abroad, whose communities in those days were neither so rich nor so successful as they would become. Long disdained by the emperors, the Chinese overseas turned against the Manchus and became the financial mainstays of Sun Yat-sen's republican revolution. By contrast, the commissars in Beijing courted them assiduously, and in recent years overseas Chinese and their billions have made a decisive contribution to China's economic breakthrough. Today, the dual success of the Chinese, both at home and abroad, has profound implications for China's power in the world. It is a novel development in international politics, and the heirs to the world's oldest empire will not fail to do their imperial best in making the most of it.

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NEWT'S FOLEY

by Linda Killian

West Palm Beach, Florida

HOUSE SPEAKER NEWT GINGRICH did everything for congressional Republicans in 1995—strategy, management of issues, drafting of legislation, communications. This year, after botching budget negotiations with President Clinton, he has taken a back seat. He may not like it, but his most important role is fund-raising. He'll do an average of six fund-raisers a week between now and November, dropping into 175 House districts.

Even those GOP freshmen who groused about Gingrich's overbearing leadership style last year are thrilled with his fund-raising prowess. Rep. Mark Foley of Florida once sniffed that he owed the speaker no special allegiance because "Newt Gingrich didn't elect me to anything." Lucky for him, Gingrich didn't hold a grudge. Here's what Gingrich did for him in less than four hours on March 25:

It's 7:45 in the morning, and about 70 people who have donated $1,000 apiece to Foley's reelection campaign are gathered in a meeting room at the PGA National Resort in Palm Beach Gardens.

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Foley is nervous. The event was scheduled to begin at 7:30 but the speaker still hasn't shown up. Jeb Bush is working the room.

An hour has been scheduled for this event, but Gingrich knows it won't take that long. He arrives around 8:00. He doesn't look awake yet, and he doesn't look very happy. He stands next to Foley while a small line forms. Two of Foley's staffers serve as "pusher" and "puller," moving people through. It's Harold Vanarnem's turn. He's the chairman of a computer network company from Del Ray Beach. He stands between Gingrich and Foley. A picture is snapped. Gingrich isn't smiling, but Foley has a grin so broad you'd think this was the happiest moment of his life. It takes less than 10 seconds, and Vanarnem seems underwhelmed by the speaker: "I got a couple of grunts from him. He said 'Uh-uh,' and so I guess that was 'Hello, how are you doing?'"

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE MAY NOT LIKE IT, BUT HIS MOST IMPORTANT ROLE IN 1996 WILL BE FUND-RAISING—A ROLE IN WHICH HE EXCELS.

In less than 15 minutes, Gingrich is ushered through the kitchen and back corridors to another room, for a local news conference with Foley. Reporters want to know about a tax on sugar producers, whether the GOP will carry Florida, the Republican freshmen, the government shutdown, the budget.

There is "zero likelihood" that he and Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole will sell out on a budget deal, Gingrich asserts. He's not exactly making news.

By 9:00 he is seated at the head table in the resort's banquet hall. Foley introduces him, and he receives a standing ovation from an audience of 700, who have paid either $250 to sit in the front of the hall or $150 for seats near the back. Gingrich seems to draw energy from the crowd. For the first time this morning, he looks like he's enjoying himself.

It's a 25-minute speech, vintage Gingrich. He lays out the accomplishments of the 104th Congress and explains: "The things we haven't gotten done are almost entirely due to one person—Bill Clinton. In a few cases, they're due to the Senate. . . . So the marching orders for us this fall are pretty simple: It's seven plus one. We need seven more Senate seats and one president." He touches on taxes, regulation, welfare, crime, and wraps things up. "We need to reelect Mark, we need to carry Florida, and with your help we are going to give our children a safer, a more prosperous, and a healthier America."

The speech is a hit. Before the applause has even crested, Gingrich is slipping out a back door, headed to a small private gathering at the Palm Beach home of Jose "Pepe" Fanjul. The Fanjuls once owned one of the largest sugar companies in Cuba (and the house where Castro now lives). Their Flo-Sun, Inc., is among the major sugar producers in Florida.

Just days before, the House has passed a farm bill maintaining price supports for sugar and providing $200 million for restoring the Everglades. Pepe Fanjul is pleased. His brother Alfonso, formerly a major giver to the Democrats, has broken with the Clinton administration over its attempt to force land out of production and to tax sugar to finance environmental improvements.

About 25 members of Team 100—who have given $100,000 or more to the Republican party—are gathered in one of the Fanjul living rooms. This is a business meeting. Team members want to know what the strategy is for winning the White House and who Dole's running mate will be. Gingrich tells them that Dole will have to use his time in the Midwest and the West; the South must be won locally. For vice president? Probably a midwestern governor.

Can Bill Weld beat John Kerry in Massachusetts? Gingrich says maybe. What about medical savings accounts? Gingrich replies that Republicans will "make Clinton veto them" to prove a point, then remove the idea from legislation since they lack the votes to override.

Asked whether the party's position on abortion can be toned down, Gingrich doesn't mince words. The platform's call for a constitutional amendment banning abortion cannot be altered, because this would upset the party's right-to-lifers. However, he says, the party can "allow pro-choice people to speak in prime time" and deny Pat Buchanan a prime-time stage.

The speaker concludes by telling the donors that they must "give more" and get a friend to join. He says the reason Republicans have to raise so much money is to offset the "liberal media." They have to counter Dan Rather on the evening news.

A few handshakes and he's gone. Mark Foley considers the morning a smash. He has netted $170,000, by far the most he's ever raised at a single event. Less clear is whether Newt Gingrich—inevitably overshadowed this year by the presidential ticket—can be happy relegated to the role of fund-raiser extraordinaire.

Linda Killian, the former editor of National Public Radio's "All Things Considered," is writing a book on the House freshmen.

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The Hyper-Entertaining of America

By Michael Anton

A disembodied voice with an impeccable English accent speaks. "We're talking with Natalie Merchant, whose new solo album *Tigerlily* is topping the charts and wowing the critics." It sounds like an MTV interview, or maybe a radio clip, but there is no commercial, no station ID, nothing to indicate the source of the broadcast. I look around for TV monitors, but there aren't any. I keep listening for some clue to its origin—who's putting it out, who's paying for it, anything. But no, the voice just keeps droning on, punctuated by rock singer Natalie Merchant's recollections of growing up in Syracuse, dancing and singing barefoot in dank nightclubs when she was 17, making it big with 10,000 Maniacs (a rock band), leaving 10,000 Maniacs, her hopes, her dreams, her philosophies. And all the while no break, no pause, no ads, nothing but this suave Englishman and Natalie Merchant, chatting away. Then it hits me. This isn't a broadcast—it's a pre-recorded set piece, canned and piped over a bunch of speakers like the "channels" airlines offer to crabby passengers through those miserably uncomfortable plastic headphones.

This revelation came to me at the Virgin Megastore, at Sunset Boulevard and Crescent Heights in Los Angeles. In this multimedia retail palace where the concept of the assault on the senses has been refined to the point of ritual, I was shopping for a CD or two as the horribly loud "interview" kept going on and on, and for the life of me I couldn't figure out the point. It was driving me crazy, but no one else in the store seemed to mind.

Then, another revelation: The Virgin people have canned and piped this infernal noise because they realize their customers don't just want to *shop* anymore. That's too dull. They want to be *entertained*, by a never-ending stream of music, commentary, images, whatever, while they search the shelves for a little piece of entertainment to take home and play on their home entertainment system. The Virgin execs know—and the rest of the commercial world either knows too or is being forced by the market to learn—that home entertainment is no longer enough for most Americans. They want, need, demand to be entertained away from home, too. And not just when they go to the movies or a concert or a ball game, or to some other such traditionally entertaining event, but when they go anywhere.

Tom Wolfe once said of the omnipresence of Muzak in Las Vegas that it was "as if there were a communal fear that someone, somewhere was going to be left with a totally vacant minute on his hands." Wolfe made this observation in 1964, and what was once true pretty much only of the neon-painted desert is now true of almost the entire country. This phenomenon—the hyper-entertaining of America—has spread with the tenacity and speed of a souped-up Ebola virus. The heartland is affected no less than the coasts, little hamlets no less than the great metropolises.

Go anywhere and expect to be entertained: at the store, at a restaurant, at the laundromat. I remember in my college days washing my clothes at a dingy little coin-op place that had two TVs, one always tuned to a soap, the other to some lurid talk show. Back then (no more than 10 years ago) that was all the entertainment the average clothes-washer required. Not anymore. Now there are singles laundromats, designed as pick-up joints for the Maytag-less unattached. What better way to keep the mind occupied during a mundane chore than an array of members of the opposite sex, all available and all scouring around for . . . *someone*? No need for the pretense of collecting the contents of a dryer you want to use, sidling up to some pretty lass and asking, "Are these yours?" to break the ice. Now you just charge right up and ask for a date. It's expected.

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From laundromats to food: When I was about 10 I loved a chain called Bobby McGee's, where all the waiters dressed in different costumes and the food and drinks were served in imaginative but barely functional vessels. My parents didn't care for it much, but they were indulgent and they took me there from time to time. Back then it was unusual if not unique, this cavalcade of characters serving truck-stop food in pirate outfits and singing songs to all the diners. Nowadays, it's difficult to get *away* from costumes and songs: In New York, in a five-block stretch, there are two horror-movie-themed joints, one called Le Bar Bat and the other Jekyll and Hyde; a few hundred yards from the latter is the Motown Cafe, where singing groups come out every 15 minutes to offer simulacra of the Four Tops and the Supremes. And just try escaping decor: In L.A., if you want a submarine sandwich and you're worried about getting bored while you eat it, just go to Steven Spielberg's Dive! in Century City, an eatery that looks conspicuously like the Beatles' Yellow Submarine, replete with portholes, bubble noises, and steel gratings for floors. And if you feel like getting a little starstruck while you fill your tummy, there's a Planet Hollywood and Hard Rock Cafe, those quintessential mixes of entertainment, food, and T-shirts, in just about every big city in America.

Peter Steiner

These used to be places, like theme parks, where people went on special occasions once every five years or so—packing up the family and taking them to Disneyland or Six Flags for a bit of wholesome escape from grim reality. But now the experience is available every weekend, and there is no longer any need to go to an actual theme park. The theme park ethos—squeaky clean spaces, densely packed attractions, audiovisual extravaganzas at every turn—has spread beyond the theme park gates. Orlando, Florida, is a prime example. Forget Disney World and the studio tours and all that stuff you have to pay to get into. Downtown Orlando is itself a kind of theme park almost indistinguishable architecturally and spiritually from Main Street in Disney's Magic Kingdom. Aside from the 10 or so actual theme parks in and around Los Angeles, there is Universal Studio's City Walk, a recreated downtown Orlando in the hills of Burbank. Disney is getting into the act by taking over whole blocks in L.A. and N.Y.—sinking, seedy, crime-addled Hollywood Boulevard and 42nd Street—and transforming them both into milieus of good, clean, family fun.

The Disneyfication of Times Square means New Yorkers are soon going to have a big chunk of urbanized Orlando right smack in the middle of Midtown. The trial run is going on right now on 57th Street, home to the aforementioned Bar Bat, Jekyll and Hyde, and Motown Cafe. Once described by an architecture critic as "New York's Rue de la Paix," the street has become an outdoor supermall. The ultrachic, ultraexpensive shops are mostly gone, replaced by the likes of Niketown—where footwear and entertainment collide—and the Warner Brothers Store. The Warner Brothers Store doesn't just sell entertainment; it is so entertaining in and of itself that prospective browsers often have to wait in line, winding their way through the same kind of nylon maze used at airport ticket counters, just to get inside.

But 57th Street, being merely an outdoor mall, cannot compete with its indoor rivals. The purpose of the modern mall is no longer just to gather retailers together in a convenient place with a big parking lot, but to entertain the consumers while they're buying. And since it's possible to cram a great many more

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attractions under the enormous roofs of today's malls than on some city street, these behemoths blow most downtown shopping districts right out of the water. The supreme example of the form, the Mecca, the *eidos*, is the Mall of America outside Minneapolis. There, the enterprising shopper will experience not just the usual mall entertainment fare of movie theaters, arcades, and playgrounds for the kids, but a full-blown indoor amusement park to ensure that a good time is had by all, even the poor folks tired of shopping.

And it's not just venues traditionally considered outside the purview of entertainment that are getting this treatment, but old-style entertainments as well. For instance, Las Vegas. So many of the original, post-war casinos have fallen victim to the hyper-entertainment culture that the town Tom Wolfe described in the early 60s is hardly standing anymore. And this in the city whose first manifestation led some phrase-maker in the Chamber of Commerce tourism office to dub the place the "Entertainment Capital of the World." Well, to stay on top, you've got to stay ahead of the game, and Vegas has managed to remain the capital by recreating itself almost from the ground up. Much of the old Strip has been razed to make way for the new type of casino, the "theme" casino. The Mirage has an indoor jungle and a phony exploding volcano; Treasure Island has a pirate-ship war every hour; the Luxor has a full-size replica of King Tut's tomb and a 10-story duplicate of the Sphinx (with a nose job). And the monster is the MGM Grand, the largest hotel in the world, where the magical land of Oz, Emerald City and all, awaits after you walk through Leo the Lion's open mouth to get inside.

Hyper-entertainment has also penetrated those shrines to our national pastime, America's ball parks. Not so very long ago, some clever major league baseball executive came up with the idea of keeping restless fans busy between innings with "dot races," electronic horse races splayed up on the scoreboard in which three variously-colored dots race around an electronically generated "track." The fans just went wild for it, in some cases cheering louder for their favorite dot to cross the finish line than for their favorite player to belt one out. And so a new era in sporting-event entertainment was born. Ball parks are no longer places to watch games—who can take the tedium? Now they are entertainment complexes with bars, pool halls, and booths hawking "interactive" devices that allow the spectator to play along with the action on the field. Toronto's Skydome, really more of a theme park than a ball park, was way out in front of this trend when it opened in 1990, but now is emulated by just about every new park going up and every renovation of an existing one.

All this interactivity means that television, once the very essence of entertainment, is no longer entertaining enough on its own for some people, who need their interactive devices to keep gameshows and even dramas like *Murder She Wrote* watchable. (Is Mrs. Fletcher on the right track? Push 1. Could that wholesome girl from Vermont really have done it? Push 2.) Poor television! It was only a few short decades ago that it overwhelmed radio, relegating the once-proud medium of Glenn Miller and "The Shadow" to providing background noise for drudgery like housework and commuting. Now people treat it like lowly radio, leaving it on for hours on end, just for the sake of the comfort or distraction of its constant hum. It remains to be seen whether "interactivity" can save TV from becoming just another generator of background noise.

Background noise . . . this seems to be a common thread running through the entertainment culture. People don't much care for quiet anymore, if they ever really did. They need some kind of sonic stimulation to keep them from falling asleep or else from becoming so hopelessly bored that they might as well be asleep. Radio and television provide it at home. More enlightened public venues, like the Virgin Megastore, provide it away from home. And for those places where Godawful, stony silence reigns, there is the Walkman. The small portable radio/cassette player was considered quite revolutionary when it first appeared in the early 1980s. Back then, the things were as big as shoe boxes and cost several hundred dollars. But they were hailed as the companion appliance for the new age, the era in which boredom might finally be routed and forever eradicated. We were told that they would shrink and that their cost would come down. Both predictions proved true, and now a sizable chunk of the citizenry is plugged into a portable sound machine, grooving away on streets, in the subway, at the grocery store.

What, you ask, is the "root cause" of all this mania? Thoughtful social scientists would probably tell us that the American attention span has shortened over the past few decades, and there might be some truth to this. But the theory somehow implies that all these people who so dig the hyper-entertainment culture would be at home reading Shakespeare if only these damnable vulgar distractions weren't out there tempting them out of their library chairs and into the wide, wild world. That's wrong. For one thing, it fails to account for the success of impresarios like P. T. Barnum, the hyper-entertainer of the 19th century, or the huge popularity of prehistoric theme parks like Coney

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Island, which is today a mere shadow of its former gaudy greatness, way back in the days when according to these experts the national attention span had yet to shrivel to the size of a kidney bean.

The truer explanation, I think, is that people really just like never-ending audio-visual stimulation, and why not? Opera, *haute cuisine*, the National Gallery—that stuff's for eggheads, and the hell with it. And now ordinary people have the money to indulge their tastes. The science of demography allows entertainment executives to pinpoint with great accuracy not only what people want but what they're willing to shell out for. This was not always the case. In the 1930s, the likes of Louis B. Mayer and Jack Warner forced their fascination with manor-house dinner parties and mahogany speedboats on a public that, as it turns out, is really more interested in man-eating dinosaurs and car chases. This is a mistake that the moguls no longer make. There's just too much money at stake.

America is the richest nation in the history of the world, and whatever Jonathan Kozol says, the prosperity reaches down into the lowest orders of society. In the February *Commentary*, Amity Shlaes points out that 60 percent of America's poor own VCRs. It's a safe bet that few of those machines ever play *Hamlet*.

Combine all this new money with demography and market research, and the result is the first truly popular culture in human history. Like popular culture in every time, our entertainment culture is loud, high-spirited, ignorant, exuberant, and annoying. We might as well get used to it. ♦

HANDGUN CONTROL, M.D.

By Tucker Carlson

The people chanting slogans in front of the Health and Human Services building in Washington one morning in March looked mostly like standard-issue left-wing demonstrators—angry-faced women wearing backpacks and big earrings, slope-shouldered men with ponytails and workers-of-the-world boots—in a sea of protest signs and class resentment. Yet one aspect of their appearance seemed amiss: Nearly every person present was wearing a lab coat and stethoscope. As it turned out, these weren't your ordinary peaceniks, but doctors. They had gathered to lobby for the latest addition to America's ever-expanding definition of health care: gun control.

"We don't have to have one American die from bullets," an emergency-room physician from the Midwest shouted to the crowd. "Every one of these deaths is preventable." And who will prevent them? Doctors, of course. According to a new theory gaining currency in America's medical establishment, deaths caused by firearms can no longer be classified simply as crimes or accidents. Instead, they are symptoms of illness—or, as one physician solemnly told his colleagues, of "a chronic and recurrent disease." That disease is violence. The germs that cause it are guns, especially handguns.

By the time the rally ended, the doctors seemed in high spirits, and it's no wonder. Framed in medical terms, gun-related mayhem begins to look like one of society's most easily solved problems—nothing at all like the complex affliction that has stymied the best efforts of police, judges, and criminologists for better than a century. If violence is a disease, and guns the pathogen, then the cure is simple: Get rid of the guns. Which is just what the doctors at the rally were ordering. Why didn't somebody think of this before? It worked with smallpox.

Indeed, the extinction of the smallpox virus is what many physicians have in mind when they talk about the "epidemic" of shootings sweeping the land like a plague. In the last couple of years, hospitals and doctors' groups—from the American Medical Association to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—have conducted research and formulated policies on firearms in the belief that science can conquer gun violence as surely as it once did polio. "Guns are a virus that must be eradicated," a Chicago pediatrician named Katherine Christoffel told the American Medical Association not long ago. "Get rid of the cigarettes, get rid of the secondhand smoke, and you get rid of lung disease. It's the same with guns. Get rid of the guns, get rid of the bullets, and you get rid of the deaths."

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Christoffel, a one-time leader in the Radcliffe chapter of Students for a Democratic Society, has been a particularly visible proponent of the guns-as-germs theory, appearing frequently as a spokeswoman for the 50,000-member American Academy of Pediatrics, which advocates a ban on the "manufacture, sale and private possession of handguns" (and of "deadly air guns"). "Imagine that there was a new virus that suddenly was causing a dramatic rise in death," Christoffel explained to the *Chicago Tribune*. Handgun violence "is exactly the same thing. The problem is that since it involves a gun, it's easy to miss that fact. Still, this is a killer virus."

Talk of Ebola-like scourges makes for terrific soundbites, but this line of reasoning is a problematic guide to public policy. For one thing, guns *aren't* pathogens; not biologically, not even metaphorically. Genuine pathogens, as any doctor knows, cause disease when introduced into a pathogen-free environment. Considering that there are more than 200 million privately owned firearms in the United States, only a minuscule fraction of which are ever used in acts of violence, guns don't qualify under this definition.

Nor can gun violence, as Christoffel and others insist, accurately be called an epidemic, since its incidence in America has remained fairly constant—and in places even declined—over the past several years. And, while shootings of any kind are undeniably tragic, far more Americans still die each year from pneumonia and influenza than perish in all—not just gun related—homicides and suicides combined.

Not that Christoffel and her colleagues can be bothered by such niggling matters of semantics. What really counts for them is "the data." And the data, they say, show that guns in the hands of the American public are too dangerous to justify whatever redeeming uses they might have. Except that the data *don't* necessarily show that. When doctors venture into the realms of social science and political advocacy, it turns out, their statistics can be as mushy as their definitions.

Consider what is perhaps the most commonly quoted statistic of the gun-control movement—that "a gun at home is 43 times more likely to be used to kill a family member or friend than a criminal intruder." Christoffel and others promoting the "public health approach to handgun violence" use this factoid to convince their patients that keeping a gun in the house is not only futile as a means of self-defense, it is almost equivalent to signing the death warrant of a loved one.

Scary stuff, only it's not exactly true. For starters, the study from which this handy number is derived, printed in a 1986 *New England Journal of Medicine* article, includes suicides among the "family members or friends" slain with firearms kept in the home. Considerably more Americans kill themselves with guns each year than are murdered with guns, so this is a significant addition. While doubtless some suicides are impulsive acts, it's not clear that keeping handguns out of homes would prevent many people from taking their own lives. Some of the countries with the world's strictest gun-control laws—Japan, Hungary, Cuba—also have the highest rates of suicide.

The major problem with the statistic, however, is that it measures self-defense by the number of "criminal intruders" killed. In real life, homeowners use handguns much more often as deterrents than as means of deadly force; usually, no shot is fired. Research conducted by criminologist Gary Kleck found that each year citizens use firearms to defend themselves more than 2 million times. In only about one of every 1,000 instances is the attacker shot and killed. A body count, then, is no indication of whether keeping a gun is a good idea.

Even when the gun-related data are sound, there's no guarantee physicians will interpret them in a way consistent with responsible social science. In a 1994 paper in *Pediatrics*, for instance, Christoffel presented research indicating that white, middle-class, two-parent families in rural areas were far more likely to keep a gun in the house than black single mothers with limited education who lived in the inner city. In other words, Christoffel's data showed, gun ownership was most common among people and in places associated with the country's lowest rates of violent crime. The most violent areas had the fewest reported guns at home.

Statistics like these should be enough to make any gun-control advocate rethink her assumptions about whether gun ownership leads to violence. But not Christoffel. Instead, she advises that "pediatricians treating families with the highest likelihood of [gun] exposure (rural single-family homes, white mothers, adult males present, few preschoolers) should strongly consider incorporating household firearms into anticipatory guidance discussions." As if the Americans most in need of a stern talking-to about gun violence were farmers.

With conclusions like these, it is no surprise that a 1995 review of medical literature on guns and public health published in the *Tennessee Law Review* found that many studies "are so biased and contain so many errors of fact, logic and procedure that we cannot

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regard them as having a legitimate claim to be treated as scholarly or scientific literature." Edgar Suter, an emergency physician in San Francisco's East Bay who has written about the medical establishment's foray into gun policy, agrees. "There are things being done in the medical literature on guns and violence that strain and even contravene all the canons of scientific integrity, much less of scientific methodology," says Suter. "We also have outright fabrication of data sets."

How could physicians—trained to be scrupulously precise and objective—get so sloppy when it comes to facts about guns? When emotions are involved, it's easy. Deborah Prothrow-Stith, dean of the Harvard School of Public Health, comes close to admitting as much in her recent book. "My own view on gun control is simple," she writes. "I hate guns and I cannot imagine why anybody would want to own one. If I had my way, guns for sport would be registered, and all other guns would be banned." So much for the scientific method.

William Bramhall

For a better sense of why otherwise sensible physicians would go out of their way to advise the public on subjects they know little about, it's worth taking a look at the American Academy of Pediatrics, the most radically anti-gun of the major medical associations. Agitating for gun control, it soon becomes clear, is part of a larger pattern of Naderesque finger-wagging. The group takes generally left-of-center positions on just about every trendy subject imaginable, from sexual harassment, corporal punishment, and welfare reform to the 55 mile-per-hour speed limit. The group's nannyish instincts really run amok when it comes to warning parents about the dangers of skateboards, pick-up trucks, snowmobiles, trampolines, bicycles, horseback riding, all-terrain vehicles, ride-on lawn mowers, and, most recently, shopping carts. If there was ever an organization on the lookout for a new "national epidemic," this is it.

Why, then, does anybody listen to these self-appointed gun experts? The short answer: Because they're doctors. As a paper from the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence shrewdly points out, "Doctors are among the most asked—and trusted—sources of child safety information." And a lot more. Even to a skeptical public, a physician's judgment—on just about any subject—carries considerable weight. All doctors know it; ideological doctors use it.

According to literature produced by Handgun Control Inc., for example, pediatricians are more than simply good at being doctors, they're also crackerjack sociologists, shrinks, and criminologists. "Doctors are experts in child and adolescent behavior," the pamphlet advises, "and can give parents clear-cut steps to reduce the chances of unintentional and intentional (assaults, homicides, and suicides) gun incidents." Dr. Katherine Christoffel must have taken this assertion to heart. "I have good credentials," she says modestly, "both as a child advocate and an epidemiologist." From there it's a natural progression to larger callings. "To the extent that I'm an epidemiologist and a public health official," she says, "my patient is the population." Doctor to the world.

For those who would wonder aloud about the seemliness of a physician's pronouncing outside his or her field of expertise, the response can be swift and stinging. In a remarkable November 1995 op-ed in the *Washington Post*, David Satcher, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, responded to attacks by the National Rifle Association, which had challenged the accuracy of CDC studies on gun violence.

"Of all people in our society," Satcher wrote, sounding bewildered and angry, "few are more dedicated to intellectual probity—to seeing things as they are—than scientists; it is, in fact, their life's work. If

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we question the honesty of scientists who give every evidence of long deliberation on the issues before them, what are our expectations of anyone else? What hope is there for us as a society?"

In other words, challenge this research and America itself falls apart. Could anybody but a doctor get away with a statement so nakedly self-serving? If the head of the plumbers' union wrote a piece chastising anyone who dared "question the honesty" of plumbers, would people take it seriously? Would the *Post* even print it?

No matter. The physicians churn out a seemingly endless series of op-eds, though it is not clear that they are adding much to the debate. The arguments that surround gun violence are complicated, the obvious conclusions often less obvious than they appear. Perhaps it is a subject that, as a doctor might say, is best left to the experts. ♦

Abortion Politics at the IRS

By William J. Gribbin

The politics of abortion has affected so many different aspects of public policy that its intrusion should come as no surprise in any activity of the federal government. Even so, it is disappointing to find abortion partisanship at, of all places, the Internal Revenue Service.

Such partisanship explains the case of the Life Legal Defense Foundation, a California-based organization that defends the First Amendment rights of pro-life activists. Life Legal's experience provides eye-opening evidence of the extent to which the IRS can be made to serve the ideological commitments of true believers within its civil service ranks. In the process, the IRS is setting some ominous precedents for tax exempt legal operations of all sorts. If its approach in the case of Life Legal prevails, organizations across the ideological spectrum can expect to face new hurdles in trying to secure or maintain their tax exempt status.

The saga of the Life Legal Defense Foundation began under the last Republican administration, in April 1990, when the organization applied to the IRS for tax exemption. Its activities included arranging educational seminars for attorneys, filing amicus briefs in state and federal courts in cases involving civil liberties and abortion, challenging local legislation limiting the rights of demonstrators, publishing a newsletter, and often successfully defending the First Amendment rights of pro-life protesters in civil and criminal court actions.

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More than two years later, in December 1992—significantly, after the presidential election—the IRS sent its initial ruling, denying tax exemption to Life Legal. The process by which that decision was reached was curious, to say the least. The first hint of difficulty came when Life Legal's application was referred from the Los Angeles branch of the IRS (where applications from California are submitted) to Washington, D.C. Someone, presumably at Treasury, had decided that all abortion-related applications were to be centrally processed.

At that point, what ordinarily would have been a cut-and-dried decision by regional IRS officials—making sure the Foundation's papers were in order, that it wasn't a scam, that it did real legal work on constitutional issues, and so on—became an inordinately long process at the IRS national office. Concerned about the delay, Foundation representatives repeatedly called IRS officials to inquire whether there were problems and whether more information was needed. In one particularly revealing conversation, on December 23, 1991, an IRS representative mentioned that there was a "split of opinion" at the national office, a disagreement "basically along the same lines as the abortion controversy in general."

That's a peculiar observation from what is supposed to be the nation's nonpolitical tax office. Its meaning only became clear a full year later, on December 22, 1992, when the IRS, in a nine-page letter, finally informed Life Legal that it did not qualify for exemption under Section 501(c)(3) of the tax code.

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In the internal IRS contest over the fate of Life Legal, the pro-choice faction had won. The December 22 letter, over the signature of Gerald Sack, chief of the Exempt Organizations Rulings Branch, reads like a rehash of old NARAL newsletters. It recounts at length Operation Rescue's actions at abortion clinics in places like West Hartford, Connecticut—even though Life Legal (1) never had any affiliation with Operation Rescue, (2) was in no way involved with any of those incidents, and (3) did not participate in any of the litigation resulting from them. Nonetheless, said the IRS letter, "The individuals you represent in connection with their conduct at 'rescues' knowingly and intentionally violate criminal trespass, disorderly conduct, and other statutes, and subject themselves to arrest. Because defending individuals who engage in such conduct is a substantial purpose of your organization, you must establish that such activity is protected under the First Amendment."

Michael Ramirez

Where to begin dissecting this assertion? First, Life Legal's defense work had been almost entirely on behalf on individuals who were not engaged in "rescues." Its clients had been persons who contested local ordinances—sometimes unilateral police edicts or court orders—that restricted peaceful protesters in various ways. In many cases, those individuals were vindicated with Life Legal's help. So they did not "knowingly and intentionally violate criminal trespass . . . and other statutes." Second, one wonders whether the IRS staffers are old enough to remember the men and women who did indeed "knowingly and intentionally violate criminal trespass . . . and other statutes" in the civil rights sit-ins that led to desegregation in the South. It's a good thing the new IRS litmus test was not applied, in those bad old days, to the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. Whether from ignorance or zealotry, the IRS dismissed several decades of civil liberties litigation when it told Life Legal, "A substantial purpose of yours is to defend individuals accused of criminal conduct which is itself unlawful. This is not an exempt purpose."

But there's more. To wit, this insight from the creative minds at the IRS: "Many, if not all, of the persons represented by attorneys affiliated with you have some personal economic interest in a favorable resolution of their case. Many . . . are defendants in civil or criminal prosecutions or in other actions. The client clearly has an economic interest in avoiding a criminal or civil fine, a claim for damages, or incarceration." Therefore, said the IRS, representing those clients does not have a "charitable purpose."

Of course, the same thing can be said of the defendants in any litigation involving First Amendment rights. No matter what the issue—animal experimentation, military activities, labor relations—persons who test what they perceive as improper restrictions on their rights run the risk of economic penalties, that is, fines. But does that disqualify them as clients of tax-exempt legal foundations? Apparently it does, if they belong to what Justice Scalia has called a "currently disfavored class," such as opponents of abortion. Wittingly or not, the IRS is laying the groundwork for future administrations to similarly disqualify other legal defense groups, including those that pursue a liberal view of justice. Needless to say, Life Legal protested the IRS's denial of exemption, at which point the IRS's handling of the case turned from suspect to absurd.

The Foundation filed its protest on June 3, 1993, along with an entirely proper—and astute—request that the administrative files of eight 501(c)(3) organizations be placed in Life Legal's administrative file. These included the American Civil Liberties Union, the ACLU of Northern California, the ACLU of Southern California, the Committee for the Support of *Roe* v. *Wade*, and the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. The purpose was obvious. If the IRS was operating under a double standard—imposing upon Life Legal requirements that other organizations did not have to meet—its ruling would not be defensible in tax court.

Perhaps that is why 11 months passed without that information's being supplied. Finally, on April 26, 1994, the IRS responded that if Life Legal wanted to

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see those organizations' files, it had to request them under Section 6104 of the tax code. It did so on June 16, 1994. More months passed, and Life Legal's representatives reminded the IRS that they were awaiting delivery of the files. But none came.

Instead, the IRS took a new tack. One official suggested that Life Legal might receive its exemption if it agreed to follow written case-selection standards drawn up by the IRS—a requirement not imposed on other legal defense organizations. Offensive as this singling out was, Life Legal's attorneys responded in good faith with their own case-selection standards on January 31, 1995. Instead of broadening the dialogue, this shut it down. The IRS did not reply.

At which point—on May 31, 1995—Life Legal went to the U.S. Tax Court for a declaratory judgment as to the Foundation's tax status. Would the IRS actually argue in court, in public, before persons trained in the law, that a legal defense organization could not be exempt if it defended persons facing civil or criminal liability? Would the IRS try to establish a non-existent link between Life Legal and Operation Rescue? Why not the Colombian cartels?

The IRS did none of the above. With a straight face, it argued thus:

Life Legal has all along insisted that the IRS should not rule on its case until the Foundation reviews certain requested files. But Life Legal hasn't reviewed them. Therefore, the Foundation hasn't exhausted all its administrative remedies and the tax court has no jurisdiction to decide this matter. In its own words, the IRS "was waiting to receive copies of relevant documents from the Foundation concerning the administrative files of other Section 501(c)(3) organizations for inclusion in the Foundation's administrative file"—even though the Foundation could not comment on those files because the IRS itself would not provide them. In fact, it still has not provided them, almost three years after the initial request. Little wonder that the presiding judge of the Tax Court, Julian I. Jacobs, told the IRS attorney, "Don't try to defend the indefensible."

Nevertheless, technicalities are the life of tax law, and on February 20, 1996, Judge Jacobs accepted the IRS's argument that Life Legal had not exhausted all administrative remedies. The judge made two points. First, Life Legal had continued to pursue administrative remedies by submitting to the IRS information about its most recent litigation nearly to the date it petitioned the Tax Court. Indeed, it had: to make the strongest possible case for its tax exemption.

The second technicality is the crusher. Yup, it's those administrative files of the left-liberal legal defense groups. Judge Jacobs found that Life Legal would first have to obtain that information from the IRS and then submit it back to the IRS to make it part of Life Legal's administrative record. Though he found the IRS "unable to explain why [the requested material] was not provided," he also noted, "We have no evidence that respondent's delay in responding to petitioner's Section 6104 request was purposeful, or that it was designed to prevent petitioner from completing its application."

He had been right the first time around. The tactics of the IRS attorneys were "indefensible," and so is the mindset with which they approach issues of civil liberties. One more illustration should suffice. In a telephone conference on November 29, 1993, an IRS official, confronted with numerous cases in which Life Legal attorneys had successfully advanced their clients' rights, questioned whether those cases qualified as defense of civil rights in the same way that "landmark" civil rights litigation does. But blockbuster cases don't come often. Most civil liberties attorneys must be content with the smaller stuff: upholding the constitutional rights of individual citizens whose cases do not get into the law books.

That has been Life Legal's approach, and it has paid off. In one brief period in 1994, the Foundation and its clients won (1) a remand from the U.S. Supreme Court in *Williams* v. *Planned Parenthood Shasta-Diablo*, with pro-lifers awarded legal costs; (2) a ruling by the Appellate Department of the California Superior Court that forced San Jose to amend its residential picketing ordinance to meet constitutional requirements; (3) the dismissal of charges against a sidewalk protester in San Mateo; and (4) the denial of injunctions against pro-lifers in Alameda County and Shasta County. The Foundation has handled dozens more cases like them.

If, in the eyes of the IRS, these cases have nothing to do with civil rights, it can only be because Life Legal is on the wrong side of the abortion issue.

It is now almost six years since Life Legal first filed its application for tax-exempt status. Judge Jacobs's recent decision invites the case to drag on, if not forever, at least until a major change occurs in the administration of the IRS. In the meantime, IRS officialdom will remain free to set more precedents endangering the tax-exempt status of politically incorrect causes and eventually imperiling legal-defense organizations of every stripe. ♦

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The Importance of Being Earnest

By David Brooks

Irving Howe was on the warpath. The year was 1954, and Howe saw the forces of depravity closing in. He saw the great maw of middle class commercialism—magazines, publishing houses, movie studios. Vast institutions that could buy you off, beat you down, crush your spirit. Howe surveyed the landscape and saw the broken souls of his colleagues: "Writers today have no choice, often enough, but to write for magazines like the *New Yorker*—and worse, far worse."

The horror of it was almost too much to contemplate. But intellectuals of that age didn't flinch. They had located a force that threatened to destroy civilization, and that force was dubbed "middlebrow" (Virginia Woolf's term). Middle class Americans were trying to educate themselves. These arrivistes were reading the *Saturday Review* and the *New York Times Book Review* and tromping with their moralistic steps over everything that was sacred and subtle. The middle classes were going to museums and joining the Book of the Month Club, admiring "literature" in the form of Thornton Wilder and Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*. They were creating a new form of consumer culture.

Intellectuals at mid-century looked around and decided that the middlebrow influx was the major threat to the culture they admired. It wasn't barbarism or ignorance or nihilism that set off their fury. It was the genteel tradition and middle class cultural aspiration. They were so revolted by middlebrow piety that they set out to ridicule and undermine it. And they did. But they didn't understand that this was a Pyrrhic victory. The highbrows didn't only undermine the *Saturday Review*; their own authority and the standards they held dear were victims of collateral damage. Today, middlebrow earnestness is hardly in evidence; it has been replaced by a pervasive and corrosive irony. You don't see as much pretentious attitudinizing about "Art," but at a high cost: The hierarchy of high and low culture has been scrambled beyond recognition. You don't see as many people consuming culture as if it were an exercise machine (Read philosophy 20 minutes a day and have a better soul!), but then again culture no longer seems so important to us because the connection between culture and virtue has been severed.

Illustrations by Neil Shigley

Virginia Woolf called the middlebrow "sticky slime" and "a pernicious pest." Clement Greenberg called it an "insidious" force, with its capacity for "devaluating the precious, infecting the healthy, corrupting the honest and stultifying the wise." Dwight MacDonald condemned the "tepid ooze" of the Museum of Modern Art and the American Civil Liberties Union. He investigated the Great Books series, the educational radio programs, the Book of the Month Club, and called middle class culture "the danger . . . the enemy outside the walls . . . the swamp."

These intellectuals preferred a world in which High Culture was high (their milieu) and everything else was low. The middlebrow world, on the other hand, mimicked high culture, but it didn't live up to its standards. Editorials in magazines like the *Saturday Review* carried such painfully earnest headlines as "The Future Belongs to the Educated Man" and "Art: Giver of Life and Peace." *Life* magazine carried full-page ads for a four volume set of the classics of mathematical theory, which reduced the most abstract form of intellection into coffee-table publishing. Dwight MacDonald was disturbed by the way *Life* mixed the high with the low: An editorial hailing Bertrand Russell's 80th birthday ("A Great Mind is Still Annoying and Adorning Our Age") ran opposite a photo of a mother arguing

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with a Little League umpire ("Mom Gets Thumb"). Middlebrow culture made it impossible to distinguish between who was serious and who was not. It corrupted everything with its moralizing, and bought off true artists with lures of wealth. "Let the masses have their Masscult, let the few who care about good writing, painting, music, architecture, philosophy, etc., have their High Culture, and don't fuzz up the distinction with Midcult," MacDonald concluded.

It is easy to see why the middlebrow institutions grated on highbrow sensibilities. The middlebrow magazines of the 1950s were incredibly high-minded and pompous. They were committed to a series of secular religions—Art can save your soul; Philosophy can lead to truth; Psychiatry can plumb the depths of the human mind—that are hard to take so seriously today.

The treatment of art, for example, was particularly cloying. On the one hand, popular magazines devoted an awesome amount of space to art. *Time* magazine devoted more space in 1956 to contemporary painting than to Hollywood. There were six-page spreads devoted to the abstract expressionists, long treatments of British painters called the Kitchen Sink School, and generous attention given to even obscure painters such as Charles Burchfield and Stanton MacDonald-Wright.

But on the other hand, the seriousness with which *Time* and its ilk took these painters, and the seriousness with which artists took themselves, is ludicrous. "A single stroke of paint, backed by work and a mind that understood its potency and implications, could restore to man the freedom lost in twenty centuries of apology and devices for subjugation," wrote the painter Clyfford Still.

Writers frequently claimed that America's social problems derived from the fact that Americans were not in touch with their artistic geniuses. "We have lost our concern with ends because we have lost our touch with reality because we are estranged from the means to reality which is the poem—a work of art," wrote the ur-middlebrow poet Archibald MacLeish in the *Atlantic*. Middlebrows treated artists as priests and oracles, and writers and artists themselves were happy to accept this ordination. Playwright Arthur Miller said as much in a speech at Harvard that was reprinted in the *Atlantic*: "American civilization is only recently coming to a conscious awareness of art not as a luxury but as a necessity of life....In the profoundest sense I cannot create that form unless, somewhere in you, there is a wish to know the present and a demand upon me that I give it to you."

The treatment of Freud and psychiatry generally in the fifties was similarly pretentious. The *New Republic* published a column called "A Psychiatrist Comments" in which psychiatrists would offer their professional views on politics and social situations. In July 1956, Henry A. Davidson, M.D., wrote a piece called "Our Mouth Centered Culture" in which he argued, without a touch of irony, that "we are deep in an oral stage of our culture." He maintained that the mouth is a symbol of security, since we spend the most secure moments of our lives suckling at our mother's breast. He claimed that the voter's concern for income security, much talked about in 1956, was an attempt to recapture this oral contentment.

Psychiatry was an imperial profession in those days, with psychiatrists and the psychiatry-minded feeling competent to speak on all sorts of issues. The *Harvard Business Review* published essays like "The Executive Neurosis." Cultural essays might mention Freud's castration theory. David Riesman explained Thorstein Veblen's rebelliousness as a projection of father-hatred. Richard Hofstadter explained the ultraconservatives as a collection of people whose hostility toward their parents "cannot be admitted to consciousness." All of the stuff we now dismiss as trashy Gail Sheehy reductionism was in the 1950s treated with utmost respect and seriousness.

In these as in so many realms, middlebrows and highbrows had a weakness for the Big Idea and the sweeping conclusion. Reinhold Niebuhr wrote a book called *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, a title so ambitious that nobody would dare use it today. Looking through the magazines, one finds similarly broad topics, in the highbrow *Partisan Review* straight down to the quintessentially middlebrow *Saturday Review*. *Harper's* magazine presented an essay by a Frenchman named Raymond Leopold Bruck-

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berger grandly titled "An Assignment for Intellectuals" which it summarized as follows: "A French soldier-priest suggests that American writers are shirking their duty—not only to their country—but to Truth."

Nobody uses words like truth and art in the upper case these days. It is hard to work up much faith in the secular faiths that were so evident in the 1950s. Nonetheless, don't we feel their loss? Next to the middlebrow culture of the fifties, ours seems an age of cynics, an age with relatively few things to be idealistic about.

At the center of middlebrow there was an admirable faith that the quality of one's character was in one's own hands. Leisure time spent with high culture would make you a better person. This creed drew on the long-standing Emersonian faith in high culture. "Culture," Emerson wrote in 1867, "implies all which gives the mind possession of its own powers." And the idea drew on the Unitarian tradition of self-mastery. A person's leisure time was considered consequential. If it was spent with works of art that were purifying, then character would be uplifted. Such a person would have richer perceptions and a fuller life. Degraded culture, on the other hand, would appeal only to the "lower self" and magnify that aspect of a person's personality. In short, how you spent your leisure time mattered; the choices you made would affect the quality of your character.

This is an optimistic creed, because it holds that people are in control of their own moral destinies. It's also a democratic creed. An editorial in the *New Republic* in 1922 said that the colleges of that period gave "exclusiveness to the masses." That paradoxical phrase applies to middlebrow culture as well. An insurance salesman who buys the great books series is joining an aristocracy of thinkers, with access to the most important things in the world—an aristocracy that is open to all who are willing to expend some effort.

There is also a whiff of the World War II mobilization propaganda in middlebrow prose. Its unspoken, and sometimes not unspoken, rallying cry is: The nation is in danger of moral decline. We all must rally round. We must roll up our sleeves. We must improve our minds. Underlying that was the confidence that given the right level of effort and cooperation, no task was too difficult.

Today, we don't feel so much in control of our moral destinies, either as individuals or as a nation. We don't feel, as they did, that secular tools are at hand to fashion a moral revival. It probably would have been worth tolerating middlebrow earnestness if we could have back some of that middlebrow faith and idealism. But the highbrows who waged rhetorical wars with the middlebrows didn't appreciate the good that was enmeshed in the ludicrous. They only saw the clumsiness of it and the onset of commercialism, which follows middle class tastes. The cultural trendsetters of the 1950s revolted against middlebrow in its totality. They began to argue that rich perceptions and character development could be achieved by release rather than by self-discipline, by antisocial behavior rather than by civic do-goodism.

In 1955, Herbert Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization* began its career as a cult classic, with its call for "polymorphous sexuality" that "would lead to a disintegration of the institutions in which the private interpersonal relations have been organized, particularly the monogamic and patriarchal family." And two years later Norman Mailer published an essay in *Dissent* called "The White Negro," which helped shift the elite definition of what it meant to be a cultivated person. Mailer developed a character called the hipster, who was antithetical to the middlebrow in every way. The hipster was an "American existentialist" who divorced himself from society, who cut himself off from his roots, who lived solely for the present as an outlaw. Mailer seemed to mean this quite literally. The criminal was "daring the unknown," according to Mailer. He wrote that the teenage thugs who bludgeoned a 50-year-old candy store owner to death during the course of a robbery "should not be despised." Such thuggery can lead to isolated truths, in pursuit of Mailer's ultimate goal, an "orgasm more apocalyptic than the one which preceded it."

Other highbrows, less desperate for attention than Mailer, repudiated the middlebrow in other ways. For example, while the middlebrows were earnestly trying to

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climb up the cultural ladder, many highbrows demonstrated their sophistication by climbing down. The French intellectual Roland Barthes wrote an essay on professional wrestling. Susan Sontag lavishly praised the Beatles in the pages of *Partisan Review*. Leslie Fiedler was writing about comic books. By the 1970s, a movie critic, Pauline Kael, was considered among the most important cultural critics of the age, and she was praising nudie slasher movies like *Carrie* and *Body Double*.

Like the middlebrows, the early anti-middlebrows were strikingly earnest. Indeed, if you page through the magazines of the past 40 years, the big cultural break comes not in the 1960s, with the New Left. It comes in the 1970s, with the popularization of irony. The fifties and sixties seem akin. Archibald MacLeish in the 50s and the New Leftists in the 60s were both serious and earnest, even while arguing for radically different worlds. Kitsch was attacked by both as something disgraceful. The big break came later when a debunking irony took over and little seemed serious and no crime was greater than earnestness. Kitsch was adopted as a badge of ironic sophistication.

Irony is the ultimate rejection of the middlebrow. It undercuts the very premise of the middlebrow, which is that culture and character are things worth being serious about. At first it seems to release you from the stultifying moralism of the middlebrow. But in a world corroded by irony, nobody wants to appear idealistic. Everybody wants to prove he is on to the game. Academic theorists need to show that they can see through and deconstruct high ideals. Journalists need to show that they are not falling for politicians' boilerplate. Hollywood types need to show that they are hard-boiled players. So we all look for the basest motives and speculate on the crassest calculations. "It is whatever is lower that we take to be more real," Denis de Rougemont once wrote, in a phrase the sums up the current mode.

"We have literally enveloped ourselves in quotation marks," writes Andrew Delbanco in his new book *The Death of Satan*. Those quotation marks discredit the idea that it is possible to have faith in anything. The academic theory that has grown up in this era treats people, ideas, and everything else as the product of chance and "civilization" as a series of ideological deceptions. As Delbanco writes, "The idea that man is a receptor of truth from God has been relinquished, and replaced with the idea that reality is an unstable zone between phenomena (unknowable in themselves) and innumerable fields of mental activity (which we call persons) by which they are apprehended."

Delbanco is talking about his own small academic milieu (religious faith is doing fine among three-quarters of Americans). But the academic theory he describes is reflected in secular mass culture. It is difficult to worship anything, to be idealistic about anything, to have any faith in the ability to improve one's character. It is hard even to be confident in one's ability to develop standards to measure character. Mainstream reporters have absorbed Richard Rorty's point that we can only be ironic about our own beliefs, because it is only an accident that we happened to be born into our culture with our prejudices, rather than into some other one with a different set of beliefs.

The first victims of pervasive irony have been the academics themselves. In the magazines of the 1950s, a place like Harvard was invested with tremendous authority. It was assumed that there were certain texts that were sacred to understanding the world, and intellectuals, who had mastered these texts, were granted authority to speak on all sorts of matters. Sometimes they abused this authority. Edmund Wilson apparently felt qualified to talk on subjects such as economics on which he clearly knew nothing, and people seemed to listen. Now we have gone off in the other direction. Academics have burrowed into specialization and people outside the academy give them little authority to speak on broader matters, unless (like Doris Kearns Goodwin) they are good on TV. Meanwhile, the artists and novelists, who were treated as oracles in the fifties, are now denizens of their own seminar-circuit ghettos, virtually ignored as truth-tellers by the mainstream culture.

The second victims are those who think it would be nice to be idealistic about something. The common question of the past few years is why we feel so bad while economically we are doing so well. It probably has something to do with the loss of secular ideals. People like to believe in *something*, to have reverence for *something*. But pervasive irony punctures secular faiths, and it makes idealism itself seem ridiculous.

So there's little hope of finding some Great Cause just around the corner. Irony folds in on itself, and we become ironic about our own irony, ever and ever more detached. No wonder there is this vague anxiety running through the body politic, this sense of helplessness and cynicism.

The people in the 1950s had just seen the Nazis and the Holocaust. Those evils do not allow an ironic sensibility; they demand idealistic resistance. That postwar earnestness was frittered away. And now we learn that there is something worse than middlebrow pretentiousness, and that is its absence. ♦

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Books

Oh, Holy Government

By Charles R. Kesler

At a time when the winning alliance between social and economic conservatives seems ready to unravel, here comes a book on the American Revolution designed to reassure and inspirit today's aspiring revolutionaries.

Marvin Olasky, author of *The Tragedy of American Compassion*, the influential social history of American welfare policy that has become the bible of devolution, argues in *Fighting for Liberty and Virtue* (Crossway Books, 316 pages, $25) that at the heart of the American Revolution was a coalition of religious activists and tax rebels—advocates respectively of "holy government" and "small government," in Olasky's terms—who united to throw off the "big government" pretensions of the British empire. In one way or another, according to Olasky, this alliance between the supporters of personal virtue and the supporters of limited government has been central to American politics ever since, right down to its revival in the conservative movement of our day.

Reading today's politics back into the past is a dubious enterprise, of course, but Olasky claims only to be discovering the latent parallels between "political and cultural wars in eighteenth-century America" (the book's subtitle) and those of the past three decades. At any rate, his eye for the "interplay of politics, religion, sex, and revolution" distinguishes this book from any other on the subject.

The most important and persuasive part of the volume is Olasky's account of the religious roots of the Revolution. He shows that the Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s helped prepare the way for later political upheavals, insofar as the "criticism of a corrupt church" set the stage for the "criticism of a corrupt government."

This interpretation finds little favor in contemporary scholarship, which tends to view the Revolution either as the last gasp of classical republicanism or the first eruption of Lockean liberalism. But it does aid in making sense of the suspicious reactions here to the Stamp Act, Quebec Act, and other British policies of the 1760s and 1770s. Why get so upset over a small tax on tea, after all? Historian Bernard Bailyn and his followers attributed the deepening mistrust to the ideology Americans had imbibed from *Cato's Letters* and other opposition Whig writings of the early 18th century—the idea that liberty is always threatened by power, whose encroaching nature must perforce be resisted. These notions crystallized into an irrational fear of power, and so the Revolution was, in Bailyn's view, a tragic but inevitable overreaction, a kind of ideological mass hysteria.

OLASKY ARGUES THAT A COALITION OF RELIGIOUS ACTIVISTS AND TAX REBELS WAS AT THE HEART OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

Olasky, by contrast, emphasizes the growing moral estrangement from the British after the Great Awakening. The mother country didn't help matters by sending as royal governors some of the most inept and shameless characters imaginable—among them Lord Cornbury, who between persecutions of New York Presbyterians and Dutch Reform preachers took time out to don women's clothing and prowl around the governor's palace in drunken drag. In the French and Indian War (1756-1763), Americans saw first-hand the cruelty and dissolute nature of many British officers. Reports circulated widely of the blasphemies and sexual libertinism of prominent British aristocrats, who built Playboy Mansion-style pleasure palaces outside London in which to indulge their vices. And the chief prelates of the established Anglican Church, who constituted a sixth of the House of Lords, schemed to bring dissenting Americans to heel by appointing bishops for the colonies.

Faced with such provocations, the Americans really did begin to see the British as corrupt—their once virtuous empire going rapidly the way of pagan Rome, their godly kingdom falling into Babylonian sensuality. Not that the colonists thought themselves so good or holy; their newspapers and sermons were filled with self-reproach, and Olasky shows, in almost prurient detail, that some of our forebears did a lot more than just lust in their hearts. But the Americans were acutely conscious of their backsliding, and so—whether from sterner morals or the frontier shortage of vices—they came to regard themselves as more vigorous and virtuous than the British, at least.

Olasky describes how the movement for independence—the alliance between "libertarians who feared governmental power" and "Christian conservatives who

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emphasized sin"—was knit together by the political craftsmanship of Patrick Henry, Samuel Adams, John Witherspoon, and other statesmen. The movement's character was determined by the negative judgment, shared by both sides for different reasons, that political "authority must be circumscribed." Like the Reagan coalition two centuries later, this original American coalition was defined more by its possession of common enemies than its allegiance to common principles or purposes.

Yet here is where Olasky's attempt to assimilate late 18th-century and late 20th-century politics goes seriously awry. Though the Reagan coalition was largely (not entirely, of course) negative, the Revolutionary movement did stand forthrightly for a set of principles that received their most authoritative expression in the opening sentences of the Declaration of Independence.

DISESTABLISHMENT OF STATE CHURCHES SURELY OUGHT TO BE CELEBRATED AS A VICTORY FOR THE SANCTITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL'S RELATION TO GOD.

Olasky treats the Declaration as a "rhetorical compromise" between contending notions of nature, liberty, and Providence—a successful effort to parchment over differences between groups who had agreed to disagree for the sake of escaping Britain's clutches. Without denying Jefferson's rhetorical artfulness, however, it is clear that the "Awakened" believed in the Declaration's natural law doctrine every bit as much as the "Enlightened" did. Samuel West, a well known Congregationalist minister, argued in his 1776 Election Day sermon before the Massachusetts Council and House of Representatives that the equal rights of men derive from their original equality in a state of nature, a state of "perfect freedom" that was nonetheless "very far from a state of licentiousness," inasmuch as the "law of nature gives men no right to do anything that is immoral." The "most perfect freedom" therefore consisted not in following one's passions but in "obeying the dictates of right reason, and submitting to natural law." West then proceeded to confirm these principles by arguments drawn from Scripture, and to demonstrate that reason and revelation concur in giving men the right, and the duty, to overthrow tyrannical government.

Examples of similar reasoning could be multiplied. But the point is that the more "Awakened" and more "Enlightened" patriots cooperated not out of compromise but out of conviction, because they believed that revelation and reason taught essentially the same morality. The "laws of nature and nature's God" meant precisely that. Today we tend to think of one part of the conservative movement as being concerned with morality, and the other with freedom, but the American Revolutionaries were concerned with the morality of freedom itself. Thus, in late 18th-century America, the Awakened and the Enlightened were not in fact two sharply defined and opposed groups, and the Revolutionary movement was not a self-conscious coalition of them. Here, unlike in 18th-century France, the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom went together, usually in the same persons, as Tocqueville pointed out famously in *Democracy in America*.

Of course, for "holy government" and "small government" to coincide, Americans had to agree that holiness was something too precious to be entrusted to government. They had to agree that holiness demanded religious freedom rather than religious persecution. There was consensus on this from very early on, but it took a while for its implications to be thought through and worked out. Olasky comments, for instance, that after the Great Awakening, "America was looking more and more like a Christian commonwealth that combined the best aspects of individualism and community." Yet at the same time he is acutely aware that the established churches in Virginia and other colonies, though moderate by British standards, had plunged Christians into internecine warfare—Anglicans against Presbyterians, Congregationalists versus Baptists, and so forth.

But Olasky doesn't celebrate the gradual movement toward disestablishment of state churches, perhaps because it looks to him like a dilution of religious seriousness. Rather, he accepts it as a tactical concession to reassure the Enlightened. But surely it ought to be celebrated as a victory for the sanctity of the individual's relation with God, which lay at the heart of the Great Awakening and would soon blossom forth anew, thanks in part to the law and spirit of religious liberty, in the Second Great Awakening.

Olasky's stimulating book carries the story of the fight for liberty and virtue up to the writing and ratification of the Constitution. Like many conservatives today, he appears to think that the opponents of the Constitution had the better argument, or at least were more prescient than its supporters. Hence he blames many of the problems of our current centralized welfare and administrative state—high taxes, the imperial judiciary, the "Beltway mentality"—on the Fed-

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eralists, who wished to "make the country safe for ambition" by creating a complicated, self-regulating government in a faraway city that with any luck would soon become "a new London."

This is populist history with a vengeance, always finding someone besides ourselves to blame for our troubles. Is it Alexander Hamilton's fault that the federal budget is unbalanced? Is James Madison really responsible for the collapse of federalism? The idea seems of a piece with the right's growing tendency to trace our contemporary problems of "big government" back to the defenders of the Constitution 200 years ago—instead of blaming the relentless critics of the Constitution who over the past century have done everything they could to subvert and supplant it. At the least, it behooves Olasky and other conservative populists to explain how and why the Constitution, which had successfully restrained the federal government's power and ambitions for so long, should suddenly, late in this century, have given its blessing to an American version of social democracy.

Fighting for Liberty and Virtue casts a bright but narrow light on the religious background of the American Revolution and is a lively reminder that neither virtue nor liberty, taken by itself, is the American idea. But left in the shadows are the moral and political principles that actually inspired and guided the Revolution, which renders the book much less useful to present-day conservatives than it might have been: Populism is no substitute for constitutionalism. Olasky knows that the voice of the people is not the voice of God, yet he so despises today's secularized elites that he often forgets to remind the people of their own limitations. This isn't good for us as children of God, or as citizens of the Republic. ♦

Books

FREUDIAN QUACK-UP

By Gwen J. Broude

The reputation of Sigmund Freud has scarcely known a day of peace. It has been under steady assault since Freud unveiled his theory of human personality at the end of the last century. A respected Viennese doctor who attended one of Freud's famous lectures dismissed Freudian ideas as "a scientific fairy tale." Twenty years later, the *Nation* took note of Freud's "ingeniously obscene imagination" and suggested that he could "discover a sexual motive in a binomial theorem." In the 1950s, neuroscientist MacDonald Critchley identified psychoanalysis as "the treatment of the id by the odd." And today, the average psychology textbook relegates Freud to the status of historical footnote. You would think that psychoanalytic theory, sickly even at birth, would by now have been laid to rest. Why would anyone still bother to attack it?

One who would, and does, is Frederick Crews, a former professor of English at Berkeley and a veteran Freud-basher. His *The Memory Wars* (New York Review of Books, 299 pages, $22.95) consists of two essays that appeared in the *New York Review of Books*, accompanied by some of the correspondence they provoked. The first essay, "The Unknown Freud," criticizes Freudian theory proper; the second, "The Revenge of the Repressed," assails the "recovered-memory movement," which Crews regards as the "stepchild" of psychoanalysis. These essays make clear that we should continue to care about Freud because his legacy is alive and kicking—with effects that are far from benign. Moreover, we should worry about the stubbornly irrational turn of mind revealed in the correspondence defending Freudian theory and psychoanalysis.

"The Unknown Freud" is a withering account of Freud as man, theorist, and therapist. The picture that emerges is of a corrupt, celebrity-hungry Machiavellian who cares more about his own reputation than about his clients, or the truth. Freud writes letters to colleagues while his patients are under hypnosis. He naps while they free-associate. He is "indifferent to [their] suffering and quite dismissive of their real-world dilemmas." He constructs psychoanalytic explanations for conditions whose origins are clearly physiological, as in the case of Emma Eckstein, "whom Freud had grotesquely misdiagnosed as 'bleeding for love' [for Freud], whereas she was actually suffering from a half-meter of gauze . . . accidentally left within the remains of her nose" following surgery. Protégés who object to the way he runs his ship, he tosses overboard.

WHY DOES FREUD CONTINUE TO HAVE SUCH A HOLD ON SO LARGE A PUBLIC, DESPITE THE FACT THAT HIS THEORIES ARE WITHOUT EMPIRICAL SUPPORT?

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Crews's Freud, in short, is not an attractive figure. You would not want him to come to dinner or marry your daughter. But that alone is not enough to demolish Freudian theory, and Crews knows this. His critique does not rest on character assassination but rather on Freud's poor habits as a scientist (motivated by his "appetite for fame") and on the anti-scientific nature of his theory. Thus, we are treated to a Freud who embellishes, fudges, and even fabricates evidence for the sake of self-promotion. For his seduction hypothesis, the centerpiece of early Freudian theory, "Freud himself laid down the outlines of the seduction plots, which were then fleshed out from 'clues' supplied by his bewildered and frightened patients, whose signs of distress he took to be proof that his constructions were correct." This is a "different Freud from the canonical one . . . quite lacking in the empirical and ethical scruples that we would hope to find in any responsible scientist, to say nothing of a major one."

"The Unknown Freud" quite rightly focuses on the ways in which Freudian theory falls pathetically short of science, rehearsing the usual litany: Psychoanalytic theory depends on anecdote, unfounded inference, the confusion of speculation with fact, generalization from a small number of cases, ill-defined and untestable theoretical constructs, self-confirmatory hypotheses, rejection of rival explanations, and so on. In sum, "what a psychoanalytic explanation tells us," Crews says, "is itself."

But despite all this, Freud could still be right. And if the theory is untestable, is there any way of finding out? Crews applies the right kind of strategy for assessing an untestable theory in the second essay, "The Revenge of the Repressed," his indictment of the recovered-memory movement, which he describes as a "frenzy that is deluding countless patients . . . into launching false charges of sexual abuse against their dumbfounded and mortified elders." Crews wants Freud to accept his share of the blame for the recovered-memory movement because it borrows from him its premises as well as its primary therapeutic tool, the uncovering of repressed memories.

Chas Fagan

Recovered-memory therapy depends on the idea that people tuck the memories of traumatic events in childhood deep into the hidden recesses of the mind. It further relies on the notion that these memories can be called up with professional help. Freud's ideas about repression are naturally at the heart of the movement. As with other Freudian concepts, it is hard to imagine how we can disprove that repression occurs, as any claim on Patient Smith's part that he has not repressed memories is answered with the counterclaim that Patient Smith believes this only because he is repressing.

Crews addresses this problem by citing evidence from the psychologist Elizabeth Loftus regarding how memory works. Loftus's empirical research, writes Crews, "has established that memory is inherently sketchy, reconstructive, and unlocalizable. Whether pleasant or unpleasant, it decays drastically over time, though less so if the experience in question gets periodically 'rehearsed'—just the opposite of what the retrievers' theory would predict." Memory is "easily corrupted," both by the deliberate or unwitting intervention of an experimenter or therapist and by the normal intrusion of subsequent experience. Loftus's findings offer "no encouragement to the retrievers' notion that 'videotaped' records of events are stored in a special part of the brain and then suddenly yielded up to near-perfect recall."

Actually, the case against Freudian repression of early childhood memories is even stronger, because there is good reason to believe that retrievable memories are not reliably laid down by young children. Human beings are notoriously bad at remembering what happened to them in infancy and early childhood. The cause of childhood amnesia seems in part to be struc-

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tural, not motivational. The hippocampus, without which memories of events cannot be recalled, is late to mature and does not approximate adult levels of functioning until two years of age. The prefrontal cortex, which is also part of the memory pathway, is not wired up at birth. The immature brain is simply not a very hospitable environment for memories, to be buried or summoned forth.

Hence, an untestable theory—even a self-confirming theory—can be disconfirmed if incompatible evidence is available. Crews exploits the Loftus research as an antidote to Freud's idea of repression. Other key Freudian constructs are similarly vulnerable to this sort of medicine, although Crews does not really do the work needed to make a larger case. The human mind as it is being described today by the empirical sciences simply does not look like the Freudian mind and cannot sustain the stories that Freud was interested in telling.

Crews's correspondents seem implicitly to acknowledge this. They are not generally interested in making the case for the rightness of Freudian theory. Some of them attempt to distance themselves from Freud's tactics without, Crews observes, recognizing the "awkward fact that their method of making 'advances in insight' remains as subjective as his own." Others offer their own new-and-improved interpretations of Freud's cases or invoke later, better psychoanalytic theorists, like Erik Erikson, the poet-psychologist who changed his name from Erik Holmberg to Erikson H. Erikson and then tried to convince the world that an adolescent identity crisis is an inevitable part of growing up. Other correspondents resort to anecdotage about therapeutic success rates. Still others see in Crews's attack on the master a transparent Freudian defensive maneuver. One of them, speaking for Freud himself, declared that "they may attack my theories by day, but they dream of them at night."

Why does Freud continue to have such a hold on so large a public, despite the fact that his theories are without empirical support? Several years ago in *Time*, Paul Gray wrote that, despite his failings, Freud "still managed to create an intellectual edifice that *feels* closer to the experience of living, and therefore hurting, than any other system currently in play. What he bequeathed was not . . . a science." Indeed, "[p]sychoanalysis and all its offshoots may in the final analysis turn out to be no more reliable than phrenology or mesmerism or any of the countless other pseudosciences that once offered unsubstantiated answers or false solace."

So why sustain the romance? Because, as Gray noted, "the reassurances provided by Freud that our inner lives are rich with drama and hidden meanings would be missed if [they] disappeared, leaving nothing in [their] place." This kind of special pleading reflects the sentiments of the letter writers in *The Memory Wars*. It also reflects the woolly thinking in evidence on TV talk shows, in *Psychology Today*, and elsewhere. As long as that is the case, we still need to care, to worry, about Freud. We should also worry about a society that values feeling over thinking and sentimentality over science, producing mushy minds that see their own reflections in the fairy tales of Sigmund Freud. ♦

Books

THE EURO-BASHER

By Jeffrey Gedmin

Mention Maastricht and eyes glaze over. That is, of course, unless discussion is punctuated by anecdotes about Brussels bureaucrats working feverishly to "harmonize" rules on everything from the size of condoms to the curvature of bananas. According to new legislation, "visually challenged" truck drivers in the European Union's 15 member states will be required to take driving tests without their glasses—after all, glasses could always fall off while the driver is at the wheel. Never mind the immediate loss of several hundred jobs in a Europe feeling the crush of unemployment, from 11 percent in Germany to over 23 percent in Spain.

Jeffrey Gedmin is research fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and editor of the forthcoming book, European Integration and American Interests.

In *The Rotten Heart of Europe: The Dirty War for Europe's Money* (Faber and Faber, $27.95, 427 pages), Bernard Connolly, a devout Thatcherite and highly regarded economist from Manchester, argues that far more is at stake in Europe's grand federalist project than bureaucratic tedium and occasional instances of regulatory idiocy. Connolly wrote the book while he was head of monetary policy at the European Commission. In fact, its publication in Europe last year got him fired. And while the book has become something of a bible for Euroskeptics in Britain, Connolly has become persona non grata in much of continental Europe. We simply don't want "madmen," one Belgian official recently told a

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British paper, as the European Union prepared for Maastricht II, the year-long inter-governmental conference that began at the end of March.

Connolly's offense? A scathing attack on the Exchange-Rate Mechanism as a vehicle for reaching economic and monetary union in Europe. Pretty dull stuff, perhaps. But for Connolly, the campaign for a single European currency, first begun in 1978 by then-German chancellor Helmut Schmidt and then-French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, represents a "massive lie" and a dangerous "confidence trick." Connolly sees the "subversion of democracy" and a threat to peace as byproducts of the work of European federalists, which he calls "economically perverse and politically perverted."

Connolly joined the European Commission in August 1978, not driven by any convictions about "building Europe," he writes, but because he believed that the European Community was a useful forum for maintaining and developing cooperation and friendly relations between Europe's democracies. Indeed, since its founding in 1957 the European Community, based on Franco-German reconciliation, has maintained this as a goal. Only later, says Connolly, after he switched in 1986 to the monetary side of the Commission, did he come to the conclusion that monetary union was really part of a larger project designed "to subvert the independence—political as well as economic"—of Europe's countries.

Connolly sees Brussels as an insatiable, power-hungry elite readily assisting the French and German governments in an attempt to impose a federalist state on their neighbors. Connolly's problem with European federalism is simple. You don't need a single currency, he argues, to maintain a single market. "Capital liberalization," he writes, "by allowing capital to flow where the return is highest, thus aiding economic development and integration, requires flexibility in nominal exchange rates." The North American Free-Trade Agreement recognizes this. Maastricht's monetary union does not. What's more, "fixed exchange rates transform domestic policy questions from 'low politics' (what gets done?) to 'high politics' (who decides what gets done?)." Countries that try to keep their exchange rates close to the Deutschmark often have to raise their interest rates, slowing down domestic growth and making the Maastricht criteria for budget reduction more difficult to achieve. Thus, monetary union reduces political legitimacy and increases economic instability in each country that participates.

It's a shame that a prime reason for Connolly's success in selling books (and offending political adversaries) is also a prime reason why his book will find few converts, and why many reviewers in Europe have been able to dismiss the book so easily. Connolly's insider story is a tale of heroes, including Margaret Thatcher and Helmut Schlesinger, the former Bundesbank president, and a long list of useful idiots and devious villains. Fair enough. But Connolly's narrative is dense with spastic and ranting references to France's "Vichyite monetary obeisance" and the "Vichy-like atmosphere created by the [French] political elite"; to European officials as "missionaries, soldiers in the crusade" against "decadent Anglo-Saxon culture" and "the pagan Anglo-Saxon worship of markets." Germany's *Eurobegeisterung*, Euroenthusiasm, is mischievously mistranslated as "Eurofanaticism." Connolly deliberately borrows Nazi vocabulary to talk of a conspiratorial attempt by today's Germany to impose a *Grosswirtschaftsraum* (large economic corridor) in Europe.

There's even talk of the ideology of "Europe" replacing the ideology of "Communism," with a "KGB" policing dissent within the Commission. "In Stalinist Russia, dissent was regarded as evidence of lunacy," writes Connolly. "In the present-day European Community," he continues, "dissent does not yet warrant incarceration in brutal mental hospitals." Entertaining, perhaps. But this kind of heavy breathing obscures a genuinely fascinating analysis and important political message—that the stubborn attempt to forge monetary union may actually drive Europeans apart rather than closer together.

Of course, everyone's up to something different, says Connolly, whether the Irish, the Dutch, or the Portuguese. The Italians, for instance, have always sought Europe as a solution to their internal problems, which is why many favor being ruled from Brussels rather than from Rome. Seventy-six percent of Italians say they favor giving up the lira for a European currency. But it's the French and Germans who lead the campaign for a federal Europe, and it's these two countries, with their conflicting motives, that worry Connolly most.

The French, ever cognizant of German power and believing that money is politics, seek "capture of the Bundesbank" through monetary union, according to Connolly. It's a grotesquely naive proposition, in his view, presumably to entail careful maneuvering by clever French technocrats at a future European Central Bank. Nevertheless, to help execute the plan, the late president François Mitterrand saw to it that the French people were subjected to a "relentless" stream of propaganda. On the eve of the French referendum on Maastricht, for instance, the French gov-

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ernment staged an elaborately rigged telethon, which included a live appearance by Kohl (in Bonn) pleading for a "yes" vote and a debate between Mitterrand and Philippe Séguin, the leading "no" campaigner. The Mitterrand-Séguin debate was scheduled immediately after Kohl's message and following nearly two hours of interviews with Mitterrand interspersed with various pro-Maastricht commentaries.

Like Mitterrand, Jacques Delors, president of the European Commission until 1994, saw Europe's federalist project as a necessary evil. Ceding sovereignty in favor of European unity was a way to extend French influence, to tame German power, and to confront the Americans and Japanese. Connolly rips French leaders for their delusional and "blinding arrogance," while wondering simultaneously how "murdering" the economy can ever find popular support on "geopolitical" grounds. He has a point. In fact, when Helmut Kohl visited his French counterpart this past fall, he gave the Gaullist leader a stern talking to about deficit reduction and France's struggle to meet the convergence criteria for monetary union (scheduled for January 1999). President Jacques Chirac did a complete turnabout on national television the very next day. Deficit reduction, not job creation, would henceforth be the French government's priority. Collaborationist Vichy it's not, but Chirac's sudden change of heart is a vivid illustration of Connolly's concern about national sovereignty.

What do the Germans want out of all of this? Connolly carefully documents how the Bundesbank has been torn between the fear of "importing vice" from its neighbors and the temptations of (greater) hegemony in Europe. The hegemonists have the support of Germany's export-dependent industrialist community. Meanwhile, two-thirds of the German population remains firmly opposed to giving up the cherished Deutschmark, a symbol of stability and affluence for more than four decades. Unlike in France, and to the relief of Germany's political leaders, Maastricht need not be put to the test in a popular referendum.

But economic issues are the tip of the iceberg. "Europe is first and foremost a political program, not an economic program," says Wolfgang Schäuble, chairman of Kohl's Christian Democratic Union. From monetary union to a European ministry of economics is a short step. And from there it's not difficult to see how one then arrives at political union. About this, Germany's political leadership has been remarkably candid. And this is what scares Connolly most.

Connolly's observations about Maastricht's democracy deficit are important, and he's right to attack Kohl for suggesting that failure of the federalist project means nationalism and war. Nation states and nationalism are not the same thing. And the democratic Europe of 1996 bears little resemblance to the Europe of 1926. Yes, if it happens, monetary and political union will mean protection for the French and German welfare states, continued statism on the Continent, and a European Union that will serve more than ever as cover for German interests. There are questions and problems everywhere you look. Nevertheless, insinuations about war and Maastricht as the "most dangerous folly in Europe since Munich" are where Connolly's evidence runs out. It's also where his overblown rhetoric matches the ridiculous posturing of his opponents, whose house of cards, had he been a bit more clever, Connolly could have more effectively blown down. ♦

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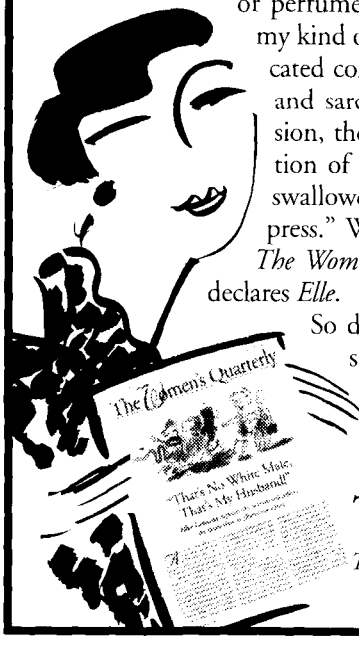

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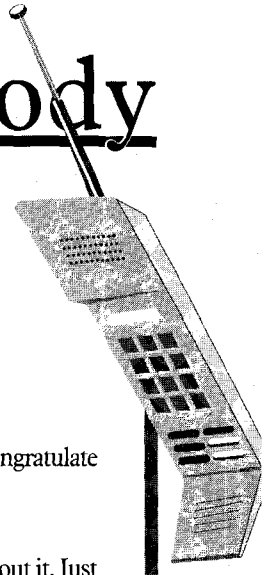
Colin Powell phoned Bob Dole at his Bal Harbour, Fla., apartment on Sunday. Neither would comment on details of the conversation. "It was nice of him to call," said Sen. Dole.

—News item, March 31, 1996

Parody



Dole: Yeah?

Powell: Hey, Senator. How's the next president of the United States feeling today?

Dole: Bob Dole's feeling great. Feeling young. Fit. Energy level's good. Who the hell is this?

Powell: It's Colin, Senator! Colin Powell!

Dole: How are you, General?

Powell: Puh-leeze! Forget the formalities! It's Colin to you, Mr. President-to-be! I just wanted to call and congratulate you—and to wish you good luck on your vice-presidential selection.

Dole: Oh.

Powell: Of course *I* couldn't do it. So put the idea out of your mind. Please. It's a call I do not yet hear. Forget about it. Just not going to happen! So who are you going to pick?

Dole: Well, been thinking about one of those Midwest governors. Michigan. Engler, maybe—

Powell: Engler? Big chubby guy, right?

Dole: Well—

Powell: I like the contrast. You're a war hero, he didn't serve in the military. . . . You're in fine physical condition, he's the Pillsbury dough boy. . . . You're tough, reasonable, moderate. He's—

Dole: Got triplets. Three cute babies. Babies are the future. What it's all about.

Powell: Sure! Probably conceived during the Gulf War. Of course, some of us were busy cutting off an army and killing it, but anyway. . . . Who else?

Dole: Voinovich. Governor. Ohio. Big state.

Powell: Love it! You want a guy with the courage of his convictions. If George Voinovich wants to raise taxes, by God, you can bet he'll raise taxes until your nose bleeds. People will love that. Anybody else?

Dole: Tommy Thompson.

Powell: Whoa! Watch out! Charisma overload!

Dole: And Kasich. That Greek broad likes John Kasich.

Powell: Good contrast again. You're an adult. Kasich looks like he's working on a balanced-budget merit badge. You could do a photo-op when he shaves for the first time.

Dole: Well, look. . .

Powell: No, really, it's a good line-up. Real bench strength in your party—sorry, our party. Gosh, I wish it was a call I did yet hear, but it's just out of the question.

Dole: Okay.

Powell: I don't follow politics much. But someone told me about poll data, indicating within a 3.5 percent margin of error that Powell-Dole runs ahead of good ol' Bob Dole by 5, or 7, or even 8.5 points, depending on sampling technique and weighting of variables, of course. Powell-Dole could be pretty tough—

Dole: You mean Dole-Powell.

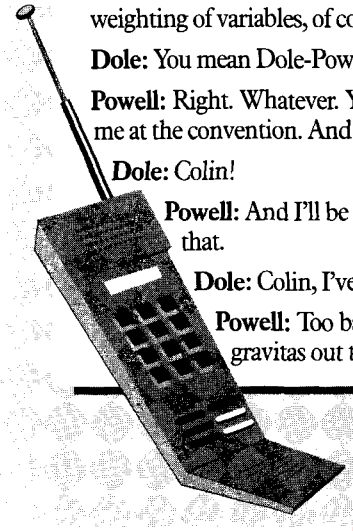
Powell: Right. Whatever. You know, it's pretty tempting. Havin' you up there, by my side. Maybe you could introduce me at the convention. And Bob, I'd want you to hold the Bible when I take the oath of office—

Dole: Colin!

Powell: And I'll be counting on your experience, Bob, when it comes time to make those tough decisions. I mean that.

Dole: Colin, I've got to go. Shuffleboard starts in 10 minutes and—

Powell: Too bad it's a call I do not yet hear. But think about it. Two war heroes. One with charisma, youth, gravitas out the wazoo . . . and you, too, Bob—



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These are just some of the things we're doing to help prevent underage smoking. We don't claim that any one of them is an answer by itself.

But they all help keep cigarettes away from kids.

And that's the best way to keep kids away from cigarettes.

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Action Against Access.

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